

CLATSOP COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY QUARTERLY

CUMTUX



Vol. 20, No. 2 – Spring 2000



**RAY
HORTON**

The Clatsop County Historical Society's Archives houses a number of photograph collections. Especially notable are the collections of:

Reuben Jensen
Louis Sovey
Fred C. Wilson
Sam Churchill
Oney Camberg

Jim & Carol Bingham
Polly McKean Bell
Ed Parker
Elmer Coe
R.A. Horton

Tom Carmichael
Annabelle Miller
Carol Lambert
The Columbia River Fishermen's Protective Union

The Wilson, Jensen, and Horton collections contain the largest number of images. Almost all of Fred C. Wilson's photos (numbering about two thousand) are studio portraits from the 1930s and 40s. These would be of special interest to the subjects of the photos and their relatives. An index is available in the Archives.

Stored alone in two cabinets, the Horton Collection was largely forgotten until recently when Archives staff pulled out the albums, showing them to visitors. All were impressed with the quality of the photography. A sampling of their favorites appear in this issue. See page 34. Visitors can view these albums in the Archives at the Heritage Museum from Wednesday through Friday.

The Summer 1983 issue of *Cumtux* had an article on photographer Reuben Jensen. We hope to print another about him in the future.

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CUMTUX

CLATSOP COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY QUARTERLY
Vol. 20, No. 2 - Spring 2000
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(ISSN 1083-9216)

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*Front Cover: The S.P. & S. train at the
Seaside Depot on May 7, 1939. CCHS Photo
#3154 Horton Collection.*

**Printer: Anchor Graphics
Astoria, Oregon**

*CUMTUX: Chinook jargon:
"To know...acknowledge...to inform"*



Courtesy of the Author
John and Amanda Jalonon in front of their home ca. 1942.

GROWING UP IN ASTORIA: A CHRONICLE OF A CHILDHOOD: 1922 – 1940

By John William Jalonon

My Family and Home

Looking back on it now, Astoria, Oregon, in the 1920s and 1930s was an idyllic place in which to grow up. Even after having traveled widely, and living nearly all of my adult life in one of the most favored areas in California, I am sentimental about my hometown.

I was born in Astoria on May 23, 1922, in the house at 358 Alameda Avenue which my parents had built in 1917. Emil Nyman, a contractor who lived not far away, was the builder, but my father did much of the work. I was born at home, delivered by a midwife named Mrs. Kemppainen, with assistance from Dr. A.A. Finch. I grew up in that home, moving away from Astoria to go to college and the army.

My mother was 45, my father 46, when I was born. I came along fifteen and sixteen years after my two sisters had been born. I weighed over ten pounds at birth, and I learned later that the delivery had been difficult. Not until later years did I begin to sense that this rather late-in-life birth, probably a considerable surprise to both parents, had affected my mother's health somewhat and possibly even my parents' relationship.

My parents had both emigrated from Finland shortly after the turn of the century, both of them in their early twenties. My mother, whose maiden name was Amanda Wilhelmina Berg, was born in Pattijoki, a village near Raahe, Finland, on March 22, 1877. She was encouraged to come to Astoria by an uncle, Oscar Berg, who had emigrated to Astoria somewhat earlier. The Berg (also spelled

Bergh in Finland and Sweden) family, of whom there were several members in Astoria, is a branch of one of the oldest and largest families in Finland, the Sursilius family, whose genealogy is extensively documented back to the 1400s. Prominent in Astoria life for many years, among other members, were a favorite cousin, Frank Berg, a co-owner of the Owl Drug Store; William Berg, his brother, who had careers in both banking and electrical contracting; and Samuel Berg, a fire chief.

My father, John Alexander Jalonon, born with the surname of Reilander, was from the village of Nihtio, near Rauma, Finland, born on February 16, 1876. He fled Finland in his early 20s to escape being conscripted into the Czar's army and to get away from a new stepmother he did not get along with. Finland was, at that time, a Grand Duchy of Russia, and a number of able-bodied young men not charmed by the thought of fighting Russia's frequent wars managed to emigrate. My father made his way to Astoria by way of Hamburg, Germany, and after about three years on the crew of a sailing vessel. At Astoria, he came to know Oscar and Fanny Berg, my mother's uncle and aunt. They introduced him to their niece, my mother to be.

Before his departure from Finland, when many people were changing typically Swedish surnames to typically Finnish names, my father changed his from Reilander to Jalonon. Both of my parents had grown up in Western Finland in areas with substantial Swedish-speaking populations. During the very significant Finn-

ish nationalistic movement during the early part of the century, name-changing became a reflection of this ethnic and nationalistic loyalty. Finland, which had been under Swedish hegemony for 800 years until 1809 and helping to fight Sweden's wars (like the Thirty Years War), was finding its own identity in many ways.

I never knew any of my grandparents. My parents, like many other immigrants, never saw their homeland or families again. The cost and the difficulty of traveling back to Finland were daunting, and the challenge of getting established in a strange new world was all-consuming.

Having made my appearance so many years after my two sisters were born, I was somewhat like an only child. By the time I was in the primary grades in school, my sisters, Florence Amanda and Evelyn, had essentially left home. This development was convenient, in a sense, since our house had only two bedrooms. The projected second floor of our house was never completed, as my father had apparently originally contemplated. It remained an unusable attic.

Family economics

Like so many other Astorians, my father worked during much of his working life in the fishing industry--the main source of jobs in Astoria. In various non-

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My mother had two sisters who also came to North America: Anna, who married Victor Janssen and settled in Viking, Alberta, Canada, and Henrika (Hinnie) who never married and lived in New York. My mother carried on a correspondence with her mother until my grandmother's death. My father, though, evidently became estranged from his father after the death of his beloved mother and the father's remarriage to a much younger woman who, I recall my father's saying, was mean to him.

official capacities, he was employed for a number of years by Booth Fisheries and by Columbia River Packers Association (later known as Bumble Bee). In the 1920s, he owned and operated the Astoria Meat Market in Uniontown, and, in the 1930s for a shorter period, a small meat market in Astor Court. When that latter Depression-era venture did not work out, he bought a fishing boat and fished for crabs.

One day in the spring of 1933, when he was out in the Pacific Ocean in his

crab boat, it capsized in an unexpected and violent storm. In an extraordinary feat of strength and stamina, he swam a long distance to the beach at Seaside, where the Coast Guard picked him up, alive but exhausted. Reportedly one of the first things he asked the Coast Guardsmen was "Take my gold watch out of my pocket and put it in oil!"

These were the years of the Great Depression, and one often had to try various occupations to make a living. I recall many unemployed men coming to our house, asking for something to eat in exchange for doing some work. Whatever they may have been or done, they were commonly called hobos.

Another impression that has stayed with me is going downtown with my father one day in 1929 or 1930 and standing in a crowd around a local bank that had failed to open its doors. Presumably many of these on-lookers had deposits in the bank that had collapsed like many others around the country.

Never much more than fairly comfortably off, my parents were very careful about managing the family's funds. A prevailing attitude appeared to be: if you don't really need it, don't buy it. Indeed, my father was probably too thrifty, a trait that deprived my mother of a number of electric household appliances and some other conveniences we should have had. For example, an ice box. In those days blocks of ice were delivered to houses regularly; electric refrigerators were just coming into use.

Reflecting his cautious attitude concerning money, Dad kept the family's savings in U. S. Postal Savings, not a bad choice in light of the bank failures in the '30s. My parents never maintained a checking account. Dad would pay all of the monthly bills in cash, in person, occasionally annoying the cashiers at the electric and gas companies by going in to pay the bills before they had even been mailed out.

During the Great Depression my mother practiced a number of new economies. She and several neighbor ladies made their own butter, sharing the use of a wooden churn beautifully crafted by John Jaaskela, who lived across the street. They also made laundry bar soap.

Summer was canning time, when the succulent peaches from the Yakima Valley would appear in the stores or were purchased from the growers going door-to-door. I have never since tasted such luscious peaches as the Elbertas and Hales we bought by the lug. Mother also "put up" apricots, pears, plums, and several varieties of berries which showed up in pies and sauces in the winter. Oh, those wild blackberries!

The canning process took over the kitchen. Clear and blue Ball and Mason jars were brought up from the basement, to be washed and sterilized in steaming kettles of water on the kitchen stove. Steam filled the kitchen, and the heavenly aroma of the cooking fruit permeated the house as the freshly peeled and cut-up fruit was plopped into the kettles.

Milk was delivered to our home daily, first by Raasina Dairy and later by the Heino Dairy, both family-owned operations located out on the Lewis and Clark Road. We never bought pasteurized milk; our non-homogenized milk was topped by thick golden cream in the narrow portion of the bottle--rich enough to whip. We also bought eggs, apples, potatoes, and occasionally other produce from farmers who came to the house.

A depression-era economy that I almost wish nobody had thought of was replacement rubber half-soles for shoes. These were fairly common among kids in our neighborhood. They were applied, after scraping and scarifying the worn leather sole, with a foul-smelling glue. It didn't hold very well. Sometimes, while I was sloshing along on my way to Gray School, a sole would begin flapping loose. That could mean very wet, cold feet, perhaps a nasty cold.

Despite my dad's "make do" attitude at home, he frequently lent or gave money to various people in need, but too often somebody he had met rather casually. In one case that I remember a loan had gone sour. My father had lent a substantial amount of money to a couple in Warrenton, taking a mortgage on several downtown buildings as security. Dad had been obliged to foreclose on the loan. I recall how angry and furious these debtors were. I do not recall how this matter was resolved, but I do remember that something was worked out in the offices of my father's attorney, the senior Robert Anderson.

We never owned a car. Like many others during these times, in a small town, we got along fairly well without one. Astoria Transit buses were convenient for trips downtown. I walked the mile from our home to Captain Robert Gray School, and got drenched too many times. Only seldom did I take a bus to Astoria High School (then the building at 16th and Jerome), helping to provide the legacy of my strong legs.

The first ride I had in an automobile was probably in a black Model T Ford owned by our neighbors, Harvey and Saima Lundell. Another early experience in a car was in a very elegant Rickenbacker sedan, with a gorgeous canework top, owned by--of all people--a former minister in my mother's church.

Our house

Our home was at 358 Alameda Avenue, located in what is now designated as a historic district, Uniontown. The house, which is still in the family, is a typical Craftsman bungalow, a style popular in the 1910s and '20s and enjoying renewed popularity among lovers of older houses.

The house contains a living room (in the front or street side of the house), a separate dining room, two bedrooms, a large "family kitchen," a separate cooking and food preparation kitchen, one bathroom, and a full basement. A second

story, for which there was space and had originally been contemplated, was never finished. We certainly could have used the additional bedroom space.

Our living and dining room furniture was in the Stickley Craftsman, or Mission, style, mostly made of golden oak. This type of furniture, also, is much prized nowadays.

A small glassed-in sun porch has a magnificent view, looking out over the Columbia River to the hills of Washington and, westerly, toward the Pacific. I have never tired of watching the constantly changing panorama of water, sky, ships, fishing boats, the Washington hills, and the weather from those windows.

Being at the rear of the house, these windows now also look out at an approach span to the Columbia River bridge, which insinuates itself into the view. Nevertheless, the view is still spectacular.

The neighborhood

Uniontown, together with districts to the southwest known as Astor Court and Smith's Point, were the main habitat of the Finnish population of Astoria. Indeed, at least when I was growing up, some of the parents of my schoolmates knew virtually no English but could conduct perfectly normal lives transacting all their business and social lives in the Finnish language.

It probably never occurred to us then, but Astoria really was "at the end of the line," a jumping-off place, geographically. Yet, it has always seemed to me that, as a little city of ten thousand population, it was fairly sophisticated as compared with many much larger cities in our country. Being a seaport, a Coast Guard station, and even a Navy base for a time, shorter-term residents added to the diversity of the city.

The various Scandinavian and other ethnic groups which made up a large proportion of the population brought their cultures, and to this day celebrate and share them in various festivals. Al-

beit not exactly on the major routes for traveling performers, Astoria enjoyed visits from quite a few musicians and dancers of major stature. I treasure my memories of concerts presented by such first-rate singers as Igor Gorin, a Metropolitan Opera bass, and Jennie Tourel and Lucy Monroe, also Metropolitan soloists and fine sopranos. Quite exciting was a performance by the Don Cossacks Chorus from the USSR. A number of very competent local musicians could also be heard in chamber music and other programs.

Finland has long had a tradition of live theatre, and not unexpectedly the Finns in Astoria produced plays frequently at Suomi Hall, the center of much of the Astoria Finns' cultural life and social events for many years--but especially those Finns who had not allied themselves with the Communist cause and an affinity for the evolving USSR.

An aspect of Uniontown which must be mentioned was the quite definite, albeit friendly, division of the Finnish community between those of Communist persuasion and those whose allegiance was patriotically American--that is, the United States. The latter group were usually church-goers; the Communist sympathizers were not. Some of the Soviet sympathizers were believed to be card-carrying members of the party. The activities of the "Reds" were centered in Columbia Hall on Taylor Street; the non-Communist Finns' main gathering place for social events and many meetings (such as the Finnish Brotherhood) was Suomi Hall, just a few feet away from Columbia Hall.

Growing up, I became aware fairly quickly of who went to functions at Suomi Hall and those who attended meetings and other activities at Columbia Hall. We kids had playmates whose parents were believed to be Communists, but I do not remember any frictions with any of those folks who lived near us. The parents' political, religious, or other

inclinations did not appear to make any difference to us kids. It was all very friendly.

The circumstances which led to the growth of this not insignificant block of Communists in Astoria is a large subject of itself. Essentially, though, it had its roots in the history of Finland. Finland was a Grand Duchy of Russia from 1809, but declared its independence in 1917 during the time of the Russian Revolution. During that era Finland itself (as a part of the then-Russian territory) experienced a struggle between the Reds and the Whites. There was a legacy, then, of pro-Russian leanings that came over with these emigrants, and these sympathies were nurtured further by a pro-Communist newspaper in Astoria and various forms of propaganda from the new United Soviet Socialist Republics.

A development in the 1930s which puzzled many of us children and certainly many adults, and caused much sadness, was the seemingly incredible emigration from Astoria of several families to the USSR, specifically to Karelia. It was difficult for us kids in elementary school to comprehend why some of our schoolmates' parents, with nice houses and seemingly comfortably off, were selling everything and going to that far-away place. This exodus was, of course, a diabolical program conceived by the Communist government during the period of Five-Year Plans to attract skilled craftsmen and their money to the developing USSR.

The appeal to these people was based not only on their Communist connection, but a geographic one. A portion of Karelia was in Russian territory, adjacent to Finnish Karelia, so the language problem was mitigated. Indeed, in a considerable amount of the area around St Petersburg, including the province called Inkeri, Finnish is spoken by numerous people. Presumably offers of good jobs and high pay were dangled before these folks.

Sadly, virtually nothing was ever heard from or about most of these emigrants back to the USSR. I remember bright students, such as Jorma Pilpola and Doris Suttinen, who went with their families and disappeared.

Alameda Avenue, the principal residential street of Uniontown, displayed a diversity of architectural styles, no cookie-cutter tract houses. There were numerous variations of what could be considered Victorian, and the total effect of houses seen against the green hills of West Astoria was somewhat reminiscent of some New England towns. Providing more texture to Alameda Avenue and its intersecting streets were many 1910-20 era bungalows, more or less in the Craftsman style.

In the late '20s the wood plank streets and sidewalks along Alameda were replaced by concrete or asphalt, making walking to school much easier than it would have been somewhat earlier.

It was altogether a pleasant street and neighborhood, with its attractive well-kept houses and gardens. Hardly any families bothered to lock their doors. Whatever may have been happening in other parts of the country or world, I remember this time as being happy and even innocent.

We knew almost everybody in the neighborhood, at least by sight. Relatively seldom did newcomers move to Alameda Avenue, and a new kid in school--or the loss of one moving away--was a rarity. My two godmothers were neighbors: Saima Jaaskela Lundell next door on the west side, and Olga Pietarila in the next house beyond that.

Matt and Olga Pietarila owned the West Bond Market during my growing-up years, then subsequently sold it to our other neighbors, Harvey and Saima Lundell.

No doubt there are as many genuine "characters" around now as there were in our Astoria neighborhood in the '20s

and '30s, but I have not encountered as many. I mean characters not in a pejorative sense, but as distinctive, interesting, and sometimes even slightly eccentric personalities. We had several like that in our neighborhood. Here are a couple of examples.

Two doors over from us, living in an apartment on the second floor of Similas' house, was "*Mummu*" Niemela. Mummu is the Finnish word for an old woman [or grandmother], used in a rather affectionate nuance. She lived alone; I knew little of her background. Mummu belonged to a super-conservative religious sect called Laestidians. She ruled out of life anything that might be pleasurable or fun, it seemed to me, including movies, dancing, and playing cards. She lectured me periodically, even after I was in high school, on the sinful temptations all around us.

Living in a small apartment in the Pietarila's home, two doors over in the other direction, was a "mystery man." He, too, lived alone. Very few people spoke to him, and were probably somewhat intimidated by his appearance. He dressed in dark clothes, his appearance reminding me of men in photos of Eastern European immigrants at Ellis Island early in the century. He was rather forbidding in appearance, walking along our street in a shuffling gait, head down. His name was Morris Jaffe, and he was Jewish. One of my friends, a few years older, had somehow become acquainted with him, and discovered that Mr. Jaffe was a very well-read intellectual. Given an opening, he was a very interesting conversationalist. Amazing how little we often know, or care, about those around us. Not only did he have a good command of English, but he spoke some Finnish, in itself a considerable achievement.

Working and shopping

Uniontown was largely a working class neighborhood, populated mainly by fishermen and their families and employees of the seafood canneries; Pillsbury Flour Mill employees; logging company and lumber mill workers; and some trades people.

A daily sight during all but the winter months was the pedestrian traffic of gillnetters going to their boats in the late afternoon and the women who worked in the canneries. To this day in my memory I can evoke the smell of the fish canneries lingering in my nostrils. There were other distinctive smells in our environment, those of factories making by-products of the fishing industry, such as fertilizers, and some from a wood veneer plant. Gratefully we also were blessed with fresh ocean breezes much of the time.

A pleasant recollection is drifting off to sleep to the sounds of fishing boats tied up at the wharves, gnawing at their hawsers and groaning rhythmically as they were rocked by waves of the Columbia. There would be occasional blasts of ships' whistles calling for river and bar pilots, and the very frequent splash of rain on the windows from Northwest storms. Sounds carried very well from the river and up the hill to our house.

The compact little shopping area on Taylor Street (since renamed Marine Drive) and West Bond Street (around the corner from the Doughboy Monument intersection) provided most of the basic day-to-day needs. Finnish Meat Market for groceries and meats; Astoria Market also for meats; West Bond Market for groceries; and Hellberg's Drug Store on the corner of West Bond and Taylor were regular provisioners. In all of these, and in most other business establishments in Uniontown, Finnish was spoken.

Hellberg's was a much frequented place of business. I could say that it was indispensable to our existence. It was a pharmacy and purveyor of toiletries and

other drug store items, to be sure, but it also housed a wonderful soda fountain--a quintessential, classic American fixture. There was a magazine and news stand, the only one I recall in the western part of town. The wonderful, civic-minded Hellberg family who owned and minded the store (Gus, Fred, Lila, and Edith) must have had to throw away more than a few periodicals that were dog-eared or stained with chocolate or ice cream from sticky fingers.

Another treasure for kids was the dazzling candy counter in a mom-and-pop store known by the proprietor's family name of Nikka. It was about a third of the way down the Alameda hill, a short walk from home, and saw many a visit from me and many other kids. Running down there with a nickel or a few pennies in my fist was a positively euphoric experience, contemplating what specific penny candies I would select from that glass-windowed array of riches. Ice cream--and we kids tucked away a lot of it--was obtained very conveniently from the Workers' Cafe on Taylor Street, where the basic flavors were vanilla, strawberry, chocolate, and occasionally maple nut. Farther westward, as Alameda Avenue wound around to Astor Court (the area of Captain Robert Gray School) there was another, smaller cluster of shops, where Beemer's Grocery Store did a brisk business in ice cream cones during our lunch hour at school. Beemers offered flavors which we encountered nowhere else.

Also within our neighborhood orbit was Agate Grocery, owned by our good family friends the Richard Simonsons, at the intersection of Alameda and Agate Street, and McCallisters' Cash Grocery on Taylor near Portway. What pungent memories these little neighborhood Mom-and-Pop stores evoke now.

Life at home

Possibly because I came along so late in my parents' lives and I was like an only child (the only boy after two sisters),



Courtesy of the Author

**Florence and Evelyn Jalonon, with their brother, author
(John) William Jalonon, ca 1925.**

I was very protected. Not perhaps in all aspects, but in many. My father's work kept him away much of the time, so my mother was the dominant parent. Even

when my father was not away, he spent very many evenings at a card club or lodge. I have felt, in retrospect, that my arrival on the scene when he was already

46, with two almost grown daughters, was not exactly in his plans.

My sister Florence Amanda was born on June 19, 1905, and Evelyn on March 11, 1907, both of them in Astoria. During this period the family was living on, I believe, West Franklin Avenue in a rented house. Both girls attended public schools in Astoria. During part of the time when I was growing up, and after they had left school, they worked as domestic help and, part of the time, "lived in" with their employers.

After a failed marriage in 1929, Florence brought home from California a baby daughter, Roberta Louise, who grew up with me almost as a sister. She is now Mrs. Bill Buck and lives in Traverse City, Michigan. She and her husband have two grown sons, Timothy and Kevin.

Florence was married happily in 1933 to James Albert Simmons, who served on a Coast Guard cutter in Astoria. They added two children of their own to the family: Julia Ann born in 1937, and Michael James, born in 1939. Julie, as she is called, lives in Ann Arbor, Michigan, with her husband, C. Philip Kearney. They have a grown daughter, Susan Molly. Michael and his wife Ann live in Portland. She had two children from a first marriage.

Evelyn was also married in 1933, to Earl M. Hustoft of Portland, also a Coast Guardsman in Astoria. They had no children and were divorced in the early '40s. Evelyn remarried a few years later, to John Ivar Palmrose, who had grown up in the Svensen area. John had a son, John Palmrose, Jr., from his first marriage. The son, John Jr. and his wife, Loretta, have been close to his step-mother ever since John's and Evelyn's marriage.

Because of the disparity in my and my sisters' ages, as well as their absence a great deal from our home, I really did not have much of a relationship with them while I was a child. They both had

a succession of boy friends and dated a lot. Florence occasionally took me out, including my first motion picture, and some trips to nearby beaches. I saw less of Evelyn, I recall.

My nieces and nephew were still relatively young when I left Astoria in September 1940 to attend a business college in Portland and then to work for a while before being drafted into the Army. Consequently, I saw them only during occasional visits to Astoria and after my return from military service, during summer vacations from Stanford University.

My cradle tongue was Finnish, the first language of my parents. My father also spoke Swedish, but not as well as Finnish. I began speaking English concurrently as soon as I could talk. My parents spoke both Finnish and English at home.

There were constantly other people around our house. Both of my sisters, after they were married in the mid-1930s, lived in Uniontown; and, with their husbands, came over frequently in the evenings. In that age before television, a friendly neighbor or two would "drop in" without advance notice almost every evening. I wonder, to this day, how I managed to be such a good student, do my homework, and read so much!

Before I entered school, my mother took me with her frequently to visit friends. There was a lot of this type of social visiting, nearly always accompanied by afternoon or evening coffee. Sometimes there would be other kids to play with, but I spent too many boring hours just sitting.

Visits I did enjoy very much were those to the great Victorian house of Uncle Oscar and Aunt Fanny Berg atop the hill that overlooked the dead-end of Alameda Avenue. There I would see my mother's wonderful first cousins Frank Berg and his wife Nell (of the pioneer Endicott family) and William (Bill) Berg and his wife Nelma. There I would also

see Bill's and Nelma's daughters, Joan and Susan; Frank's and Bill's sister Sophie and her husband Olger Sandblast from Portland; and their sons, my cousins Lawrence and Gerald. Occasionally other members of the Berg clan would be there, like the Sam Berg family; Uncle John Berg, an old bachelor; and other relatives from Portland and Astoria.

Aunt Fanny laid a fabulous afternoon coffee table, with always several cakes, one of them very special, Finnish coffee bread (pulla), cookies, and often a fruit compote besides.

Social graces--etiquette and good manners--were very important in my family's lifestyle. Having visited Finland numerous times, I can see where this aspect of culture originated. For example, being dressed properly for any occasion was a necessity. Indeed, a trip downtown required being "dressed nicely." We would never have thought, even, of going to anyone's home not being reasonably well dressed. I still remember the admonition on Sundays especially: "Better get dressed; someone may drop in."

Another almost inviolate custom was offering someone who came over something to drink (usually coffee) and eat (pastry or cookies). There always had to be coffee breads and pastries on hand for the week-end.

I was taught early never to address an older person (including my parents' friends and neighbors) by their first names. It has amused me to this day that my mother and a next-door neighbor, both of whom were named Amanda, decided after about forty years of knowing each other to call each other by their first names. This custom, not casually calling people by their first names unless asked to do so, is related to the presence in many foreign languages, including Finnish, of both polite and familiar forms of pronouns. Not respecting this difference is still, in Finland, as in a number of other countries, a breach of etiquette



Courtesy of the Author

Oscar and Fanny Berg, the "heads" of the Berg family in Astoria, ca. 1946.

that can stamp one as being a bit uncouth if not presumptuous.

My mother was a member of the Finnish Congregational Church, located on "Church Hill," up Melbourne Avenue from Alameda and almost adjacent to Taylor School where I completed my first year and a half of school prior to its closing. Mother attended church fairly regularly; my father did not. She took me with her quite often; and, for a small child, those times were some of the most boring and daunting experiences. There was no Sunday school, and the sermons and some other parts of the services did more to frighten than to inspire me. Concepts of sin, hell, and damnation were not on my agenda. I did, though, like the minister of the church very much: Reverend Ellis Koven, who had a lovely family.

I went, from time to time, to a Methodist Sunday School in the First Methodist Church above the downtown area. This was more to my liking. Whatever religious beliefs I hold, however,

were to take form after my high school years.

My mother was a wonderful cook, and we always had delicious and nutritious meals. Besides what she had learned growing up in Finland, her skills and variety of cuisines enlarged greatly when she worked in the homes of wealthy families in New York and Astoria before her marriage. Her Astoria employers were the prominent Herman Wise and Albert Prael families. Her cooking was a composite of Scandinavian, German, and American styles. Her Finnish breads and angel food cake were the envy of our friends. I'll never forget her fabulous Floating Island and Prune Whip desserts and the wonderful fresh fruit cobblers and tarts.

In those days vacation trips as we now know them--foreign and other long-distance travel--were rare except among the very well-to-do. The longest trip I made before I went into the Army in 1943 was to Portland, Oregon, where my sister Evelyn was living with her first husband. I was twelve years old then when my mother and I boarded the river steamer *Columbia*, which traveled between Astoria and Portland on a regular daily schedule for a number of years. It was a daytime trip up the river and a night cruise on the return to Astoria. The daytime trip, on a sunny day particularly, was idyllic. In later years, while cruising on the Rhine River in Germany, I was struck by the similarity of portions of the Rhine landscape to those along certain stretches of the *Columbia*--albeit minus the castles and picturesque villages. The night trips--and the journey did take most of the night--were a different story. I remember the rowdy, drunk passengers who kept us from snoozing as they made a big party out of the cruise.

I had a number of daily and periodic chores around the house. Our main cooking stove, a marvelous, gleaming Cribben and Sexton product, as well as our central-heating furnace, were both

fueled by wood. There was also a smaller gas stove in a separate cooking kitchen, and we had a gas water heater in the basement. In those days Astoria did not have natural gas; what we utilized was obtained, I believe, from coke. This was also before the time when heating oil became available and popular. Several cords of firewood, usually fir, were delivered each summer and propelled into our spacious basement down a wooden chute which was set up from the sidewalk in front of the house, emptying through a window into the basement. It was one of my chores to assist in getting the wood down the chute, then helping to stack it inside.

That was not the end of my handling of firewood. Smaller pieces of wood had to be brought upstairs for the kitchen stove. That task was facilitated by a woodlift--a kind of dumb-waiter--that my father cranked up into a storage cabinet near the kitchen stove. I learned early how to chop kindling, and I carried this upstairs almost every evening.

My father was a very stern taskmaster. When I was drafted into the Army, at the age of 21, military discipline was no problem for me. My father did not tolerate any "back-talk" or infractions of his rules. I had my share of spankings, usually undeserved.

School days:

Primary and elementary grades

A wonderful new world opened up for me in September 1928 when I climbed the Melbourne Avenue hill to Taylor School and the first grade. Miss Margaret Carrier greeted our 1-B class, the first semester. Most of the kids I already knew, and we were destined to march together all the way through high school. In those days very few families moved to or from Astoria. A new kid in school was a rarity.

The episode that I recall most vividly from that year and a half at Taylor School--before we were all transferred to Captain Robert Gray School--was my

debut as a singer. I had begun singing while still in a crib and baby buggy. This early musical bent was probably due somewhat to both of my parents having good singing voices. While working around the house, my mother often sang, and I quickly began picking up some of those melodies. My mother sang in a church choir and occasionally in some other chorus.

My appearance at age 6 was in a Christmas program when I appeared in a manger scene as (what else?) Baby Jesus. I sang "Away in the Manger," a little very blond Scandinavian boy in a make-believe Holy Land. I never stopped singing: Glee Club and Chorus at Stanford, church choir and bass soloist, and eventually serious study with vocal coaches and singing operatic arias and lieder in musicales.

At the mid-year point of my second year at Taylor School all of the students were moved to Gray School because Taylor School was going to be demolished. Gray had been built in 1926 at the end of Alameda Avenue in Astor Court, and was large enough to accommodate the Taylor School contingent. My first teacher there in grade 2A was Miss Orpha Kleckner. In those days all of our teachers were unmarried ladies; widows were acceptable.

It was always exciting for me to begin a new school year, even a new semester. The new teacher, new subjects, a list of books and school supplies to be purchased, and the books themselves. I do not recall having been supplied any of these materials by the school. I can still remember the names of all of my teachers, and I recall vividly most of their faces and voices.

I always liked my teachers, and it would be difficult to select a favorite. Yet, Miss Elsie Silver, in the third grade, stands out. How I loved her reading to us from a novel at the beginning of the school day. *Black Beauty* and the Doctor

Dolittle books were introduced to us by this wonderful, kind woman.

The walk from our home to school was on a pretty route along curving and partly wooded Alameda Avenue. A short-cut had been developed that started on Floral Avenue, just off Alameda and climbed over the hill to the area above Gray School. We kids took it sometimes. The hills were rich with wild flowers. Along this trail grew flag lilies (wild irises), precious trilliums, Johnny-jump-ups, May flowers, lady slippers, and many other varieties.

I was always fortified for this walk and the school day by a very good, big breakfast. One of my vivid recollections is the sound of a juice squeezer against a counter as my mother squeezed oranges for my breakfast. That almost daily ritual has carried through to the present day in our home. There was nearly always a hot cereal: oatmeal, Cream of Wheat, or Ralston wheat cereal. Bacon and eggs and toast would follow or, sometimes, pancakes or waffles. These are still among my favorite breakfast foods, and I have always regarded a full breakfast as the way to start the day.

I cannot think about walking to school without remembering also the drenching rains and driving winds which were frequent companions on the trip. I was outfitted with a yellow slicker and a "Sou'wester" yellow hat, but my trouser legs and ankles took a lot of beating as we slogged through the storms.

Very graphic in my recollections are the snow and--not much fun--slush and ice which often followed it. In those days we had snow almost every winter, nearly always in January. One of the worst winters I recall was that of 1929-30, when we had a severe silver thaw, that phenomenon which creates both dazzling beauty and treacherous hazards and destruction. A vision of a telephone pole in front of our house, reeling crazily

under the weight of long icicles on the wires, sticks in my mind to this day.

One of the most effective tricks to staying right side up on icy sidewalks was putting heavy socks over our shoes, helping the traction considerably.

one went to the library or the lavatory, you signed out on the blackboard under the appropriate heading, "Library" or "O. P." (Other Places).

For severe infractions of rules or some kind of bad behavior, the supreme



Courtesy of the Author

Members of the Finnish Congregational Church of Astoria, ca. 1928. John William Jalonen is in the front row wearing a cap. His mother, with glasses, is behind him. Rev. Ellis Koven is seated at left.

I was a good student, and continued to do well throughout my university days. I marvel at the incredibly good discipline that prevailed at Gray School. We marched to our first class in the morning to John Philip Sousa marches played on a hand-wound phonograph, again out and back at recess. There were monitors appointed to wind the phonograph.

I recall that discipline in one of our classrooms, Miss Marie Meggio's class, was so strict that dropping a pencil on the floor would reflect on one's Deportment grade. Whispering and passing notes in class were absolutely forbidden. When

punishment was a trip to the Principal's office. During all of my elementary school years, this was Miss Cecilia Mae Beyler, a wonderful administrator and educator who "ran a tight ship." I believe that our schools nowadays need more Miss Beylers. Beyond counseling and chastisement, mild corporal punishment might be administered, consisting of swats on the hands with a ruler or the dreaded rubber hose, applied to the buttocks. I gratefully suffered none of these indignities; but, serving as a monitor in the Principal's office for a while, I was aware of these more extreme measures.

Monthly assemblies were a pleasant break in routine. Plays and skits were presented; students and outside artists would present musical numbers; the Principal and teachers would make announcements; sometimes there was an outside speaker. We had a Rhythm Band, in which I played the xylophone. Mothers of the members gathered to sew our snappy military-style uniforms in the school colors of maroon and gold. These were topped off by impressive shako-type hats. I recall particularly a play in which I played the role of a slave working in George Washington's garden. In a scene which takes place in the vegetable garden of the plantation, Washington is talking to the gardener as he hoes around the plants. I was supposed to ask, "William, did you plant those cabbages?" Apparently distracted by a line somebody had just spoken about hunting, I blurted out "William, did you *shoot* those cabbages?" The audience roared with laughter.

After lunch, with usually up to a half-hour left before afternoon classes, I would frequently walk in the beautiful woods which in those days covered the hills behind Gray School. Most of the other kids were playing ball. I loved the mossy, fragrant trails that meandered around the evergreen trees, berry bushes, and ferns.

Sports--that is, team ball games--never appealed to me very much. It's a bit embarrassing to confess that, when we played baseball during gym classes, I was always somewhat relieved to get assigned to the outfield. Less chance to have to do something. I hasten to add, though, that I have always remained physically active and in good shape. I gravitated later toward tennis, swimming, a lot of walking, and calisthenics.

When I reached the elementary grades (that is, fourth to sixth) I began encountering those fixtures of, I suppose, every school: the bully and the really mean kid. I recall particularly two of this

variety, both of them big, fat boys. One of them used to scare the daylights out of sixth grade boys by threatening them with various kinds of abuse to initiate them into junior high. Another kid used to tease smaller (and usually brighter) kids constantly.

The really mean guy was from a family who were new arrivals in the neighborhood, unhappily living in a house right on my homeward route from school. He was an authentic street tough, and his reputation quickly spread. One of his favorite ploys was to wait around a curve on Alameda as I walked home, pounce on me, and demand whatever I might have left in my lunch pail. I have sometimes wondered if he expanded this bit of extortion into more serious rackets as he grew up. Refusal or not having some goody could mean being beat up, and I was no match for the prowess of this tough guy. I surrendered my cookies a number of times to this character.

I regret that my father, who I believe had been very adept in self defense, never gave me any instruction in how to fend off such bullies. I just had to do the best I could, and I would never have dared report the incidents to the school principal or anybody else. Yes, I remember the names of these three tyrants. I chanced to meet one of them a few years ago, now a very friendly nice guy. We had a good chat, and I never mentioned his teasing. What kids did to each other years ago no longer mattered.

Play and other activities

For several reasons a lot of my activities while growing up tended to be indoor pursuits. Astoria's rainy climate was certainly one explanation. I did, though, make the most of our usually lovely summers. The somewhat restrictive attitude of my father was also a significant factor in keeping me out of some outdoor activities that many boys enjoyed. He discouraged me from joining such groups as the Boy Scouts or YMCA-sponsored activities. (Ironically,

as an adult and father, I became a Boy Scout Pack Chairman.)

Except for sandlot softball games and swimming, I did not care much as a child for athletics. I did, though, develop a rich and rewarding life around intellectual interests.

The public library opened up wonderful new vistas for me. I developed a love of reading early. At least every other Saturday I would walk downtown to the Astoria Public Library and explore the fascinating treasures on its shelves. My love of travel--a lifelong passion--was excited by the books of Richard Halliburton, among them *The Royal Road to Romance* and *Seven League Boots*. Then there were travel series with titles such as *When I Was a Boy in France* and *When I Was a Girl in Switzerland*.

I also discovered at the library interesting periodicals like *Connoisseur* and various other magazines about the arts and antiquities. I developed early a love of beautiful things and, when I was established in a career as an adult, began collecting them.

I somehow became aware that, in those sacrosanct nooks and corners of the library, there reposed a little special collection of books that were available for perusal only by special request at the desk. I was about 13 at the time, still almost totally ignorant about the basics of human sexuality and biology. With parents who told me virtually nothing about sex, and sensing some changes and new sensations in my body, I screwed up the courage to ask about these mysterious books that somebody had mentioned.

Apparently I qualified to see them, and took two or three of them to an obscure corner of the reading room. I quickly learned a lot, unfortunately from books that were totally obsolete, published in the latter part of the 19th century and nothing newer, I recall, than about 1910. I realized sometime later, gratefully, that these sources were loaded with all kinds of pseudo-scientific stuff, ancient myths,

Biblical admonitions, and very spurious medical and health concepts.

As I skimmed and read portions of these works in the library, I was so shaken by these horrible books that I thought I would faint. I gathered the strength to return them to the desk, and managed to get outdoors into fresh air. It took several years to get the facts straight. A newspaper, the *Portland Telegram*, and the magazine *Child Life*, provided more stimulation for my increasingly curious mind. A page in the *Telegram* was devoted to children and had a section for the NNL Club (for Never Never Land) and letters of a Pen Pal group. I began exchanging letters with children in several foreign countries. This activity led to collecting stamps, another hobby that stayed with me.

My playmates were mostly neighbor children and others in the fairly close vicinity. My best friend, from the time we were preschool kids until he died much too young in 1982, was Toivo Henry (Hank) Niemi. The Niemi's backyard adjoined ours, and Hank's interests were very compatible with mine. He was two years older than I. We went to the Pier 3 beach during the summer; played on the sandlots adjoining Taylor Avenue (now virtually all covered with structures); picked blackberries and huckleberries every summer. We read and wrote stories together, one of which was printed in the *Portland Telegram*. Together with other kids, we would sit around a bonfire at the beach, or in a circle on the sandlot or somebody's garden, telling ghost stories or recounting movies we had seen.

Like a number of our playmates, we listened to the popular hit tunes of the day on the radio, memorized the words, and tried to pick them out on somebody's piano. Hank's parents bought him a banjo, and he would buy the sheet music (35 cents a copy then) of some of the hits. Happily this was during the Golden Age of American popular music, so among these popular tunes were many of the

works of Jerome Kern, Irving Berlin, Cole Porter, Johnny Mercer, and others of the best popular music our country has produced.

Roller skating was popular, the level length of Alameda's sidewalks providing great track for skating. Skinned knees were ubiquitous in our neighborhood, and lost skate keys a constant headache.

Hank's and my playmates included the Erickson brothers, Frederick, John, and Leon, who lived nearby on Taylor Street. Also in the circle of playmates were Melba and Norma Lind, our next-door neighbors during my earliest years; Verna Lalli; Julia and Lillian Yrjana; Alice Ervasti; Doris and Helen Osmus; and Ted Salmonson. Others could be mentioned. As their surnames indicate, we were all children of Finnish immigrants.

We played a lot together, boys and girls, doing things like softball, kick the can, and going to the beaches in the Port of Astoria area on the Columbia River. The best beach in that location was the Pier 3 beach, longer, wider, and sandier than the one near Pier 2. It also was favored with a nice strip of scraggly willows and other bushy growth, providing some shade and good places for our picnics. Very importantly, it was much cleaner than the Pier 2 beach, which flanked a mooring basin for fishing boats which would dump garbage--and even sewage--into that water. The pier 3 beach, though, would all too frequently suffer from oil spills, leaving a thick coating of heavy crude oil on the sand. We would go in groups to the Pier 3 beach and build bonfires, roast wieners and toast marshmallows. We would plunge in and out of the water and lie on the sand, getting sunburned. We were oblivious then of the dangers of sunburn, and nearly all the kids would burn badly enough every summer that our skins would peel at least once during the season.

We were also unmindful of what must have been terribly polluted water around all those piers, what with discharges of many kinds of waste and oil from ships and fishing boats. Now, in this age of great environmental concerns and public awareness of polluting substances, I wonder why Astoria's city officials and agencies did not, at the very least, post warnings and otherwise publicize the hazards of this contaminated area. I remember a number of miserable stomach aches, with terrible vomiting, that occurred during the summer, very likely caused by that river water.

My father was a firm believer in teaching kids the merits of work early in life. So, for the summer vacations of my 12th and 13th years, he found a job for me at the Finnish Meat Market. I stocked shelves from the storage area behind the main store; packaged dried fruits, rice, and other bulk foods in smaller bags; candled eggs and put them in cartons; and even waited on customers and took orders over the telephone.

In those days, customers would come up to the counter, tell the clerk what they wanted, and then the clerk would go to shelves and bins to collect the items. Some items we wrapped in paper from a continuous roll, in one of two available widths. We also used paper bags, which came in several sizes. The string for tying parcels hung down from a spool suspended over the counter. I became so adept at the routines that I very soon was spending quite a bit of time at the counter. My pay for this work was the handsome sum of fifty cents a week--and a great deal of practical experience. Henry Lienes, the owner of the market; Ernie Bumala, the Grocery Department Manager; and clerks Armas Niskanen and Eino Bumala were all good, supportive mentors and very kind to me.

I saw my first motion picture when I was about eight. My sister Florence took me to the Astoria Theatre (later

renamed the Riviera) to see *City Girl*, with Charles Farrell and, I seem to recall, Mary Duncan. This was in 1930, when films were still black and white. Some time later I saw my first color film, *Trail of the Lonesome Pine*. I was quickly hooked on movies, and the Liberty Theatre, for most of my movie-going, became a very special place with its exotic, Moorish decor and magnificent chandelier.

My niece Roberta Louise (Florence's older daughter) was my frequent companion at Saturday and Sunday afternoon movies. She was seven years younger than I was, but we were good chums. With a dime for the movie and a nickel for popcorn or some other treat, we walked to the Liberty week-end after week-end during my early teens. I appreciated in later years that this routine provided a most welcome break for my sister Florence.

A memorable experience when I was about ten was the visit to Astoria of the *USS Constitution*, better known as "Old Ironsides." I was so enthralled with this historic, fascinating vessel that I would head down to the Port Docks almost every day after school to go on board again and gaze at that wonderful ship. One of the crew members, Jim Patmos, befriended me and told me a lot about the ship and its important place in U. S. history.

The Astoria Regatta was something to which I always looked forward. This event had been revived during my early childhood. When I was still too young to go alone or even with other kids to the waterfront to watch the events from the docks downtown, my mother took me to watch the exciting outboard motor races, aquaplaning, and other activities. The big Regatta parade, of course, was a major spectacle, and the carnival that came to town during the Regatta another exciting attraction.

Christmas was very traditional at our house. My father would bring in a fir

tree, which I would help trim with our lovely collection of ornaments. For many years our tree was illuminated by heavenly-smelling little candles. As lovely as the effect was, they had to be placed very carefully on the branches, with special clips and holders, and watched constantly.

A couple of very pleasant, pungent fragrances which also linger in my nostrils to this day were the Japanese tangerines we would get at Christmastime by the boxful and the extraordinarily distinctive and exotic smell of dried leechee nuts. The leechees, for many years, were a gift of Mr. Wootton (a well-known Astoria name), who would obtain them from China, where he had business connections.

Another custom at our house was the Christmas plum pudding. The day before Christmas, my mother would assemble and prepare the requisite ingredients: suet (that was always a mysterious component to me), cut-up dried glace fruits, large Sultana and smaller raisins, currants, and various other items. These were all stuffed into a cloth bag after being mixed together. Then, very early Christmas morning, my mother would put the bag into a large double boiler for the long steaming process. This traditional dessert, which I still enjoy once a year, was served with a sinfully rich hard sauce.

Christmas Eve dinner was also traditional, but was typically Scandinavian instead of the pretty-much English style Christmas Day dinner. Christmas dinner almost invariably featured roast turkey. Christmas Eve, though, the entree was nearly always lutefisk, the Norwegian name for dried cod which has been soaked in a brine-lye solution and becomes more or less reconstituted as a white fish. This was boiled and served with a white sauce and potatoes. This dish, I have observed, is not likely to make the short list of most peoples'

favorite dishes, especially if they're not from Scandinavia, but I actually found it to be rather good. Dessert at this dinner was invariably a very rich rice pudding, studded with plump raisins, topped with cinnamon and a fruit sauce. Here's one of the situations where those canned loganberries or blackberries were used in a fantastically delicious way.

Still another annual event which a number of us kids enjoyed was the arrival, on the SP&S (Spokane, Portland, and Seattle) train, of the Oregon National Guard. They were evidently brought to Portland by various means to board the train for the trip to Camp Rilea on Clatsop Plains. We found some pleasure in this event by watching the many trainloads of men passing by on the tracks along the Uniontown waterfront. We would wave at the Guardsmen as the trains passed. In preparation for the arrival of the trains, we would construct, on the sand along the railroad track, a large greeting made of dandelions: "Welcome ONG." Yes, dandelions--large, brilliantly yellow ones--which abounded in our area. We must have picked thousands of them for our large floral greeting.

High school days

In Astoria's public school system, the freshman year of high school was conducted as the ninth year in our junior high buildings. Hence, the momentous matriculation into Astoria High did not take place until our sophomore year.

For me this took place in September 1937. The Great Depression that followed the October 1929 stock market crash was still exacting a terrible toll in the U. S. Some earlier signs of recovery proved to be disappointing, and the awful toll of the worst depression in the country's history continued. Appalling unemployment; hobo jungles and "Hoover-villes"; capable, experienced, laid-off workers begging at peoples' doors; the Dust Bowl; bankruptcies and foreclosures on homes: these were but some of the facets of the grim times during which

we were entering high school. In Europe war clouds were gathering as Adolf Hitler annexed one country after another to his Third Reich.

Away from the very visible evidence of the depression that could be seen in many large metropolitan areas, Astoria outwardly did not appear different to most of us. Climbing the steps of Astoria High School's neo-Greek classical building was a very exciting rite of passage for me. I met the kids from Lewis and Clark and John Jacob Astor Schools, as well as a goodly number who came in by bus from outlying areas such as Lewis and Clark and Fernhill.

I selected the Commercial Course from among the several major course groups offered. In later years, as I prepared to enter a major university, I had some regret about the choice, since I was obliged to spend time on several courses in chemistry, physics, and biology that I had not had at AHS. A strong influence on the business program was my practical father, who saw greater economic value in this--especially given the uncertain near future of the country--than in the College Preparatory program. All in all, it served me well to follow the Commercial major since, as events unfolded, by the time I was in the senior class many of the able-bodied young men were marching off to war. I acquired skills in business subjects, typing and shorthand, which were major factors in my getting a good assignment when I was drafted in the Army less than three years later. On the plus side, also, were the courses in history and English, including literature, that I had at AHS. These were wonderful preparation for my university studies after my return to civilian life in 1946. Over the years I have been enormously grateful to Zoe Allen for what I learned in her English classes. We were introduced to the wonderful world of Shakespeare and several of the great English novelists in her classes.

It was almost a two-mile walk from our home to Astoria High, a goodly part of it up the 16th Street hill, albeit with some variations in route from day to day. There were always other kids from our neighborhood with whom to share the walk. To catch an Astoria Transit bus I had to walk down a trail to Taylor Street, something I did when it rained heavily. I carried books nearly always; but, in those days, the boys did not carry umbrellas. Especially considering the rainy climate of Astoria, I think now what a foolish vanity it was not to carry an umbrella. Had I done so, I might have spared myself from some of the miserable colds I came down with every winter.

A favorite and frequent stop after school was Lawson's Confectionery on Commercial near 12th. Lawson's was *the* hang-out, a true institution, with its long counter where we drank many a glass of Coca Cola, drawn from a tap. Lemon Cokes, lime Cokes, and cherry Cokes were drinks of choice for a lot of us. In the evenings and on week-ends we indulged in Lawson's fantastic ice cream sundaes, sodas, milkshakes, and fancy concoctions with names like Tin Roof. A gift of a box of Lawson's handmade chocolates was a popular choice.

I was involved in several activities at high school. I sang in the Glee Club; worked on the *Astor Post*, serving as Assistant Editor; acted in a play, *The High School Mystery*; worked on the *Zephyrus* staff; and was a member of Quill and Scroll, the International Journalistic Society, and the Torch Honor Society. Miss Fern Curry, who was Advisor to the *Astor Post* staff, was another teacher for whom I had a special, very high regard.

Miss Elizabeth Ogden, who directed the music activities of AHS, was influential in furthering my knowledge of and interest in good music. Selecting first-rate classical and semi-classical works for our programs, she conducted the Special Chorus and Glee Club in some excellent

programs. I remember especially two abbreviated (and simplified) versions of operas and an operetta which we performed. The operas were Bizet's *Carmen* and Gounod's *Faust*; the operetta was Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Pirates of Penzance*.

Lamenting now the virtual disappearance of music instruction in many public schools, I am very grateful for the sophisticated level of music instruction we enjoyed at AHS.

My bent for writing kept manifesting itself. I wrote many news stories for the *Astor Post*, as well as several columns. I wrote book reviews, which I have long regarded as an admirable minor literary form; reviews of popular records, radio shows, and concerts; and even an occasional gossip column.

I have loved and respected our English language all my life, and I wish I could express now, in the later phase of my life, my deep appreciation for what some of my teachers did to nurture this. In addition to Zoe Allen and Fern Curry, whom I have already mentioned and who did so much to enrich my appreciation of good writing, I also remember very favorably Isobel Willsie, a long-term teacher at AHS, who worked with us in her class in public speaking not just on *giving* a talk, but on *how* to speak well: pronunciation, articulation, and projection. We even had exercises in her class on how to walk properly, walking around the classroom with books on our heads to improve our posture.

Social functions sponsored by the school were enormously important. Dating was the thing to do, and an enormous amount of conversation among the girls (and, perhaps to a lesser extent, the boys) was devoted to who was "going out" with whom and what they were doing. The junior class prom and the senior class ball were major events, held in the school gymnasium.

It was at one of these latter events that I made my "debut" at a high school

dance. I believe it was a Valentine's Day dance, and this was the occasion for my first real, honest-to-goodness date. Betty Wootton, who lived quite near the high school, was the girl I invited for this momentous occasion.

I had recently been fitted with my first pair of glasses, after one of my teachers, Firmin Falleur, had suggested--seeing me always heading for the front seats in classrooms--that I might be near-sighted. Dr. T. O. Withers, a local optometrist, confirmed that I certainly was. On the evening of the Valentine's Day dance I took off my new glasses, wanting to look as spiffy as possible, out of some sense of vanity. I took a taxi to Betty's house; I did not know how to drive, and my parents didn't have a car. There was a light fall of snow on the ground that evening, and, as I walked up the steps to the front door, my feet went out from under me. I fell right in front of the door. My dignity was slightly bruised, but I wasn't injured. I rang the bell, to be greeted, still showing a bit of snow on my suit, by my first real date.

We paid a lot of attention, during those days, to fashions and fads. What was "in" and "cool" was quite definitely established. For girls, a virtual uniform consisted of a skirt, blouse, and--most desirably--a cashmere sweater, often set off by a string of pearls. A sweater set, with pullover and cardigan, was especially nifty. For the boys, corduroy trousers or tan pants called, variously, khakis or tin pants, were *de rigueur*. There was a period when the cuffs of cords were rolled up several inches and dirty cords were in--sometimes so much so that they could practically stand up by themselves. The Argyle socks which were very popular then could be shown off to better advantage under the rolled-up pants. Sweaters of various kinds (including those with block letters for athletics teams and clubs) provided variety to the "uniform."

The "in" shoe, for both girls and boys, was a brown and white saddle oxford, preferably one sold at Armishaw's Shoe Store in Portland. Again, dirty "saddles" were fashionable.

My mother, who had good taste in her own clothes, always saw to it that I was outfitted very well when the school year began. Beginning with my first long pants, most of my clothes were bought at Crohn and Karsun on Commercial Street. These two gentlemen came to know me very well. I was fitted for my first complete suit (I think it was a Kuppenheimer) by them. During all the years until I went away to college and the service, Crohn and Karsun supplied me with the trendiest new outfits. Indeed, I came to be regarded as one of the best-dressed boys in high school.

I never went steady with anyone during my high school years. I had quite a few girl friends, but the big school dances were the main occasions for serious dates. I learned social dancing even before my teen years. Dances, then, became a major venue of many high schoolers' social lives.

More on the high school experience

I suppose almost every student who attends high school harbors some feelings of inadequacy after graduation, some regrets about the whole experience. I have already written about some shortfall in my selection of a major subject area. Most of that was repaired fairly well, albeit with the expenditure of valuable and expensive credits at university making up some requisite courses, primarily in the sciences.

Although I excelled academically and was fairly intensively involved in outside activities at AHS, I always felt a bit "out of it" socially. I did have many friends, but no really close "buddies" except my childhood friends. Although we had a fairly attractive home, it was not one of the big houses up on the hills. We did not own a car, so I had to rely on a friend who had a car when double dates

were arranged for the big school dances, or I took a taxi. I was not athletic, and shied away from sports. I consoled myself, I now realize, with the idea that the academic experience was, after all, the main reason for being there. When the kids from the three junior highs in Astoria and the students from adjoining areas came together at Astoria High, they appeared to merge in a very harmonious student body. At any rate, I was unaware of any rivalry, enmity, or friction of any sort arising from being brought together under one roof. Student body spirit, I think, was excellent.

I was never aware, either, of any kind of discrimination among students in this student population. We were white Caucasians except for a few Asians. As to religion, it was a heavily Protestant group, with also a goodly number from Catholic, Greek Orthodox, and Jewish families. Astoria in the 1920s and 1930s might have been considered by sociologists as a quintessential small city of immigrants. A large proportion of the students at AHS were first- and second-generation Americans.

There were kids from well-established and even pioneer families descended from 19th-century settlers from the Mid-West. The parents of many of the kids emigrated in the latter part of the 19th century and early 20th to the United States coming mainly from Finland, Sweden, and Norway, with smaller but important representations from Denmark, Slovenia (part of Austria for many years), Greece, China, and Japan.

Despite the friendly mingling and associations which developed, it appeared to me that we kids nevertheless tended to mix generally on a neighborhood basis. There were the Uppertown/Alderbrook kids who had attended John Jacob Astor School. Their parents were predominantly Swedish and Norwegian. The Uniontown/ Astor Court kids who went to Captain Robert Gray School came heavily from Finnish fami-

lies. The fathers from these two major neighborhoods tended to work in the fishing, seafood packing, and logging/lumber mill industries.

The Lewis and Clark Junior High kids lived mainly in the central and hilly areas above downtown. This area was much more heterogeneous as to ethnic and national origins; more of the "old" Astorians lived here. Here also were the homes of most of the professional and merchant classes of Astoria. A greater diversity of architecture characterized this area, also, with many different Victorian styles, Colonial adaptations, and numerous interpretations of bungalow and cottage types.

There was also a Catholic high school in Astoria, Star of the Sea, located in the hills above downtown. I recall that the student body was much smaller than that of AHS, and remember knowing only one boy who attended Star of the Sea.

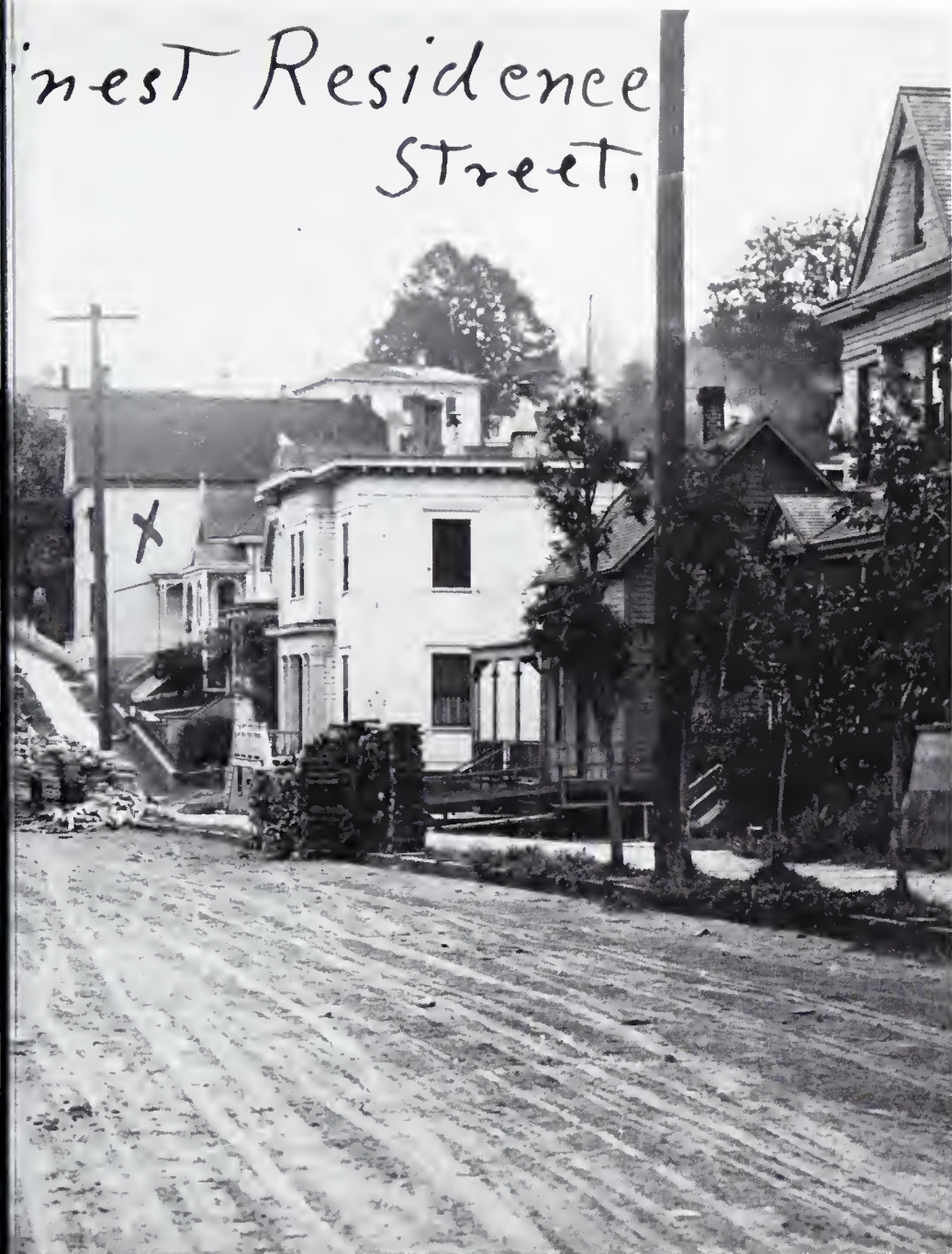
Ballroom dancing, which was very popular, provided--in addition to a lot of fun and good exercise--a great activity for mixing with kids from all over the area. This was my "cup of tea," and my kind of sport. We had at home a kind of culture, almost, that included dancing as a regular activity. Both of my sisters went to dances very frequently; my father went to dances every Saturday at Suomi Hall, although my mother never cared to go. My father was a very good dancer, and kept dancing until he was in his seventies.

I became a fairly good ballroom dancer, and enjoyed a lot of good times during the era of the great swing bands. We heard many of them at the annual Regatta dances; one of the first I remember hearing was Jack Teagarden's Orchestra. The Bungalow Ballroom in Seaside was a popular summer attraction, and kids who had cars (or friends with cars) would drive there for the dances. I recall Woody Hite's Orchestra as one of



This view to the east on Franklin Avenue, labeled "Astoria's Finest Residence Street" in the photo, shows the well-to-do houses on Franklin Street. These houses were well-to-do and most were descendants of early Oregon settlers. The original buildings were probably double or triple that at present. Families were large and even those marked with the "x" were packed with people. Houses occupied by older couples often had spouses and children. Most of the buildings in this photo are still standing except for the house on the right. Grace Episcopal Church appears in the misty (smoky?) background at the end of the street. The street was dirt on top of wood planks. Letters to the editor often complained about the noise by wheeled vehicles can be seen in the dirt, skirting the firewood. See Lloyd Howell's

Finest Residence Street.



CCHS Photo #9630-910

es to about 1900. The intersection with 12th appears in this photo. The owners of
neers (Fisher, Stevens, Brown, Rogers, Bowlby, etc.). The occupancy rate of these
m not needed was rented out. Boarding houses like the one run by Mary Stevens
ad two or three servants living with them and generally one or two of the servants
he first one at the left and the first two at the far right and the Stevens' boarding
ce street. Note the smoke coming out of a chimney near the right of the photo. The
wood in streets which were a hazzard to pedestrians and riders. Impressions made
le on page 29.

the bands that had a summer-long engagement.

We would go to dances “stag,” as going without a date was called. Girls would also go there in groups. We all knew many of the kids who went to the Bungalow, and other dances, and it was like a big party, with kids dancing with many partners during an evening and just having a lot of fun. For intermission time there were a number of little cafes right near the Bungalow, where we could sit down in booths and sip soft drinks. I remember hearing Frank Sinatra for perhaps the first time at one of these little hang-outs. From a juke box was drifting out into the summer evening that extraordinary voice singing “I’ll Never Smile Again,” a song that became one of his all-time greatest hits. This was in 1938 or 39, a somewhat carefree time before the horrible events in Europe and Asia that were to change our lives forever.

What with dancing being so popular, the high school offered, as an after-school supplementary class, instruction in ballroom dancing. It was taught by Gwen LaBarre, a physical education teacher. She helped me to polish my dancing style further.

I had many girl friends, but they nearly all were just that--friends. I did have a “crush” on a girl in the class below mine, but it developed into nothing more than a casual friendship. She lived in one of the most impressive houses up on the hill, and her father was in a profession. My not having a car, I’m sure, was a deterrent to pursuing this attraction more earnestly.

Good friends throughout my early life, until we went separate ways in the ‘40s and ‘50s, were Melba and Norma Lind. The Linds lived next door at the time I was born and until I was about seven. After the family moved from that house when the Lundells acquired it, they always lived in the fairly close neighborhood. They were a part of the group of youngsters who played together as chil-

dren, and remained close friends. Melba, the elder sister, who was three years my senior, died in 1948 at the early age of 28. Norma, two years younger than I, became estranged from my wife and me after her marriage in about 1952. She subsequently became a Buddhist nun and moved to Japan.

With Melba and Norma, I listened to a lot of music, not only the popular swing music of the day but the classics. They had a good radio and a record player, on which we furthered our knowledge and love of good music. My father would not buy a radio for our own home, mostly, I was led to believe, because it would interfere with my homework. Instead, he bought one for my sister, who lived nearby. I could go there to hear any program that was important.

Indeed, one of my regrets from my childhood years is that I was not given piano lessons. For a short while I did have a few lessons from a teacher who came to the Pietarila’s home two doors away, one of the nice things my godmother did for me. Unfortunately, the teacher was obliged to suspend the lessons because of some personal reason I don’t recall. I believe that I had shown real interest and some aptitude for the piano, playing it by ear at any home we visited where there was an instrument. At all events, any formal music study, beyond what we had at Astoria High School, came many years later.

I had another stint at working in a grocery store during the summer of 1939, preceding my senior year in high school. This was a Saturday job at Safeway in the downtown area. The work days were long--about eleven or twelve hours, for which I was paid \$3.50 for the day’s work. I stocked shelves, repackaged many kinds of bulk foods and fresh fruits and vegetables in Cellophane bags. I also had to carry boxes of groceries, as well as 49-pound sacks of flour and sometimes even 98-pound sacks of sugar, to customers’ cars.



Courtesy of the Author

The May 1940 Astoria High School graduation photo of William Jalonen.

My education progressed, while working at Safeway, concerning the rather colorful neighborhood. The store was located on Bond Street, very near the old Red Light district which had centered on Astor Street. A couple of madams who operated brothels on Astor Street were regular customers of Safeway, and Saturday was their busiest day. They would buy beer and other items for the week-end trade, and would like to have them carried over to the nearby bordello. One Saturday the store manager asked me to walk over to one of these *maisons de joie* with an order of groceries. So I did, walking up the stairs to this mysterious place rather apprehensively, rang the bell, and was greeted by the madam in a very friendly fashion. She asked me if I would like to come in. I explained, quite flustered, that I had to get right back to work--which I did.

May 1940 was graduation time. At the commencement exercises in the AHS

auditorium I walked up to the stage to be honored as co-salutatorian of the senior class, sharing the distinction with Alfhild Peterson. I went back up there again to receive the Kiwanis Club's award to the "Outstanding Boy in the Senior Class."

To the strains of Sir Edward Elgar's "Pomp and Circumstance March No. 1," we marched out into a war-clouded and uncertain future.

**San Mateo, California
February 26, 1999**

John William Jalonen

John William "Bill" Jalonen was born on May 23, 1922, in Astoria, Oregon. He attended the public schools there, graduating from Astoria High School in 1940.

Jalonen served in the Army of the United States from March 1943 to January 1946, most of that time assigned to the 76th General Hospital. The organization operated hospitals in Herefordshire, England, and Liege, Belgium. Bill was Chief Clerk in the Headquarters.

He graduated from Stanford University in 1950 with an A.B. in Economics, with a minor in U.S. History, and then attended the Stanford Graduate School of Business. He later also completed a special program in Industrial Management at the University of California Los Angeles Graduate School of Business Administration, and studied English Medieval History at Cambridge University in England.

While still attending the Graduate School of Business in 1951, Bill was sought out by a government agency for a position in Washington, D.C. After a year and a half, he returned to San Francisco to start the career in finance for which Stanford had prepared him. At the Bank of America, Bill headed a section in Corporate Banking, then managed Corporate Finance departments in two New York Stock Exchange member firms, becoming Chief Executive Officer of one of them. Eventually he returned to com-

mercial banking in 1977 as a director, executive officer, and advisor to the President of Sanwa Bank California. Bill retired in 1987 from his full time career, but continued as a director and advisor for several years.

In 1955, Bill Jalonen and Nancy Lee MacNaught were married, having been introduced by Stanford friends. Their daughter, Wendy, and her husband, Steve Fawthrop, live in Seattle with their two children. Their son, Christopher, and his wife, Dora, live in San Diego, and have a pre-school girl and boy.

Bill has served on numerous corporate Boards of Directors and has been involved in numerous community activities. He is especially proud of having been a Founding Director of the San Mateo Arboretum Society and a director and member of the Managing Committee of the Midsummer Mozart Festival in the San Francisco area. He "gives back" to the community now as Chairman of the Investment Advisory Committee of San Mateo County.

Bill and Nancy are theatre and classical music lovers. Nancy is a pianist; Bill has been a singer and now



Courtesy of the Author

John William Jalonen

studies the cello. They have traveled extensively, visiting most European countries as well as other parts of the world.

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THE WOOD PILE

By Lloyd C. (Bud) Howell

The saw mills at Bradwood, Wauna and Westport produced large amounts of slabwood, a by-product from trimming logs to make the round log into a square to be milled. The slab consisted of several inches or more of wood along with the bark.

The slab trim was conveyed to a series of gang saws that cut it into sixteen inch or four foot lengths. The sixteen inch lengths were loaded by a conveyor into a basket racked rail car. The four-foot lengths double-cross stacked onto a rail flat car that was bulkheaded on each end. Each type car carried between sixteen or eighteen cords.

The slabwood was shipped to Portland, Astoria and Seaside for stove or furnace fuel. At Astoria, Egan Wood Yard, managed by John Kelly, and Huntus Fuel received basket racks of wood, as did Stafford Fuel and Lumber at Seaside. Charles Lauru's wood yard received cars of four-foot slabs which he unloaded onto a conveyor track, with two spaced circular saws, that was mounted on a truck bed. The saws cut the slab into three equal lengths that were tipped into the delivery truck.

The sixteen inch lengths in the basket racks had to be unloaded by hand into the delivery truck. During the lean years Gus Karakalos worked as a unloader-driver for Egan Wood. Gus said spruce and hemlock sold for about a dollar fifty a load, fir for about two fifty. The truck had to be hand cranked to start it and on wet days could be quite stubborn.

Later on when the lumber market began to pick up, Gus went to work for Clatsop Mill driving a Gherlinger straddle

carrier. He became quite an artist, threading his way through the yard delivering lumber for stacking or loading.

Bosshart Fuel at Warrenton obtained the major portion of his wood from Prouty Lumber and Youngs Bay Lumber at Warrenton.

Slabwood from the mills was juicy green and had to be air dried for a considerable time before it could be burned. Throughout the city, most houses had cords of wood stacked in various stages of drying. [See Centerfold.]

City Lumber shipped in rail gondola cars of coal from Kingmine, Utah which they sold by the truckload or by the sack. A ninety pound sack of coal was fifty cents at their dock, sixty cents if delivered with a minimum of twelve sacks. A three cent refund was given for returned sacks.

The saw mills also loaded and shipped basket racks of planer ends. This was trims from the ends of dimension lumber after it had been kiln dried and planed. It was of all shapes and sizes and premium fuel for kitchen stoves, but also, it was much more expensive.

When delivered, the wood was generally dumped onto the parking strip where it spread onto the street and sidewalk. As a rule the wood was stacked on the parking strip as soon as possible to clear the street and sidewalk. Then it would be wheel-barrowed to an area to stack and dry, from there to the basement or wood shed.

Putting in wood created quite a nickel and dime income for the neighborhood boys.

Before Halloween, most householders did their best to clear the parking strip

of any stacked wood so that the “goblins” couldn’t push the stack over. However, there were many “goblins” caught later who spent time re-stacking over-turned rows of wood.

Astoria is truly a hillside city. Many homes are located on hillsides fifty or one hundred feet above the street. Getting wood up to them was a very laborious process. Most such houses had a tramway to lift the wood up the hill. The track consisted of rails made from lengths of 2 x 4s or 4 x 4s bolted or spiked to support members. The carrier had flanged wheels to ride the rails and a frame, bulkheaded on each end to contain the load. At the top of the lift, a hand cranked windlass was firmly anchored. A rope or cable attached from windlass to carrier lowered or raised the unit. A pawl and dog ratchet on the windlass prevented the carrier from running downhill free and could also be used to give the operator a rest break with the load partway up the incline. It was hard work but much better than carrying it by hand.

In Uniontown, on the south side of the street and west of the fire hall, there were some very professionally built lifts. Until just a few years ago, the remains of such lifts were still in place

Those large two- or three-story high ceilinged houses required large amounts of wood to heat them and keep the kitchen stove stoked. The wood lifts were well used throughout the year; moss never got a chance to grow on the tram rails.

Before the dams on the Columbia and Willamette rivers, the spring freshets brought many logs down river. Many of the gillnetters would use their boats to pick up and tow in the drifters to be tied up at a piling until they could be beached and cut up for wood.

Logs also floated free of towed log rafts and drifted in to shore. Timber was rather cheap and a log breaking free was considered part of the cost of operation and not worth holding the tow to retrieve it.

The city frowned on people tying logs up to the bulkheads or seawall along the waterfront as the wave action battered the logs against the rock facings, causing the rocks to dislocate which led to wash-outs. However, there were just too many logs and too many wood gatherers to fully police the problem.

A log, once tied up, was considered the property of the salvager, a rule seldom if ever broken. The log would be cut into rounds and stacked above tide range as soon as possible, as, if left through too many tides the rope was likely to fray and the log drift free to be claimed by another wood cutter.

On the beaches, the log was worked in as far as possible at high tide. On the seawall, low tide was the only possible cutting time. The moss covered rocks were very slippery and carrying a razor toothed cross cut saw quite dangerous.

Some sandy easy access beaches were by custom and long use considered as private to the use of the wood cutter or his friends. On the waterfront, between 17th and 15th street, the Printz brothers and the Mackeys each had a walk-around capstan-type winch to pull whole logs up onto the river bank. The winches were securely anchored with buried anchor logs and the capstan drum turned with a twenty foot four inch pipe that extended about eight feet on each side of the drum. Through a series of block and tackle, they could winch some quite large logs onto the bank. A facing of skid planks up the face of the bulkhead helped ease the lift. One day the section foreman came into the depot quite upset with the Printz brothers. A huge Douglas fir log had drifted in and they had tried to drag the whole log up without cutting it into two sections. Well, the strain was too great and the buried anchors were starting to pull out of the ground, so they fixed a cable from the winch to the adjacent railroad track rail and proceeded with the lift, not noticing they were dragging the track out of line.

In their spare time, local draymen picked up some extra money hauling wood from the river bank to the wood cutters' homes.

Fir was the log of choice. hemlock and spruce were the less desirable, but not to be ignored. Owners along the waterfront were grateful to the wood cutters, as a log loose beneath a building, in rough water, could quickly knock out some very expensive supports. Logs lined out from beneath a structure and set loose seemed to have a magic ability to return on the next tide and further plague the owner.

City Lumber shipped in rail gondola cars of coal which were unloaded at their 9th street dock. They supplied galley coal to the buoy tenders of the Lighthouse Service, some of the cannery tenders and launches. Quite a few homes in Astoria were heated with coal as were some downtown businesses. They also shipped in from Linnton, carloads of coal briquettes. Briquettes were made from compressed coal dust molded with a binder, much like the present-day charcoal briquettes. They were reasonable in cost and burned very hot but were dirty to handle and had an abominable odor, stored or when burned. You could buy them in bulk or by the sack.

The principal sawmills in the area were: Crossett Western at Wauna, Westport Lumber at Westport, Bradley-Woodard at Bradwood. At Warrenton were Smiley-Lampert, Prouty Lumber and Box, and Youngs Bay Lumber. At Astoria, there was Clatsop Lumber located where the Astoria Plywood Mill later stood.

Rafts of logs under tow on the river would shed large amounts of bark which in turn drifted ashore. Old growth fir bark could be four inches or more in thickness and when dried, burned very hot and clean with very little ash.

A gunny sack could soon be filled with stove size pieces, larger slabs piled above tide line for the time being. when a fair amount of sacks were filled and a stack of large slabs accumulated, a family

friend with a car and box trailer would be asked to haul it, splitting the take with him for his service.

There were certain pockets along the river front where bark would drift ashore in larger than normal amounts and the picking was good. People were very conscious of property rights then and the theft of wood or bark piled along the river bank was unheard of. I remember piles of bark that had turned gray from weathering, waiting to be picked up.

The larger mills had dockside facilities to load barges with hog fuel for sale to industrial steam plants in the Portland area.

Pacific Power and Light had a steam powered generating plant on Youngs Bay. The power house and stack are all that remains of it [now gone]. Off shore from the plant was a large dock where barge loads of hog fuel were unloaded by a bucket crane. A conveyor belt moved the fuel into the plants boiler room. There was enough storage area to assure operation in the event of an interrupted supply source. They purchased their fuel locally and from upriver mills. Chuck Paetow worked as a fireman there after high school hours and remembered that he certainly did earn his salary. It was hard work, but, it was a job and jobs were very scarce.

Adjacent and east of the Pacific Power and Light plant was Northwest Cities Gas Company. Their gasification plant produced commercial gas from crude oil. The product was stored in a large circular tank on the site. From there it was piped throughout the city for commercial and household use. It wasn't nearly as clean burning as today's natural gas and had a somewhat disagreeable odor, but was luxurious if you could afford to be connected to the system. [See page 38.]

With installation of a gas range and water heater, no more fine splitting of wood for the kitchen stove wood box, no more emptying of ashes and the inevitable

air-borne dust. Most wood ranges had a set of coils in the firebox through which water flowed, was heated and stored in a range boiler close to the stove. Hot water was drawn from the top of the boiler for washing and bathing, cold water under pressure, in turn, entered the coils and was heated replacing the hot water used.

During warm summer days, a fire had to be kept in the kitchen range to heat bath and wash water. The home canning of food could make the kitchen just as miserable.

A close watch had to be kept on the range boiler by feeling the upper portion of the tank. If it was too hot, a faucet was opened and some of the hot water drained off.

The gas water heater was a fairly simple one. It was a cast iron vertical cylinder, about ten inches in diameter and twenty four inches high, containing a spiral coil for the water to flow through. Cold water entered the coil at the bottom and left through the top and then flowed on to the range boiler. The heater was vented through the top and piped to a nearby chimney. A door in the side opened so the gas jet ring in the base could be lit with a match.

An angle cock valve at the base of the heater turned the gas supply on or off when the range boiler reached the desired temperature, which you could tell by feeling the side of the shell. You had to be attentive in its use. Should you turn it on and forget it was heating, a sudden rumbling of the boiler would warn it was getting much too hot.

It wasn't long until units were being sold that would convert wood-fired furnaces to oil-fired and wood-burning heating stoves were replaced by oil-burning heaters and later by thermostatically controlled electric water heaters.

Wood piles slowly became a rarity and the business of supplying wood for fuel could not find enough customers.

Also contributing to the demise of the wood yards was the rapid escalation

of the cost of timber. To stay profitable, the saw mills could no longer afford the gross waste of the past.

It still seems a miracle of sorts to be able to have a small wall-mounted device that can be pre-set to turn the furnace on at a set time and have the house warmed before you get up in the morning, and also, to have a ready supply of hot water any time it is needed.

Remembering the kitchen range brings back all kinds of memories: the wonderful hot cakes that were made on its top; the pot of stew that simmered there for the day's supper; the aroma from the coffee pot as it slow perked; the fragrance of the bread on baking day; and when it was cold, sitting in front of the open oven reading a book or doing homework; the last chore of the evening: filling the wood box and laying out kindling for the morning's fire and if the top was cool enough, polishing it with a piece of wax paper to preserve the luster.

Progress would seem to have doubled back on itself with wood piles once again a prominent feature of the land. But we are missing reliable wood dealers who gave you a good measure for your money and also being able to leave a stack of wood and knowing it would still be there weeks later, ready to be hauled home.

Gone is the time when we would take a nice walk along the waterfront, stop to talk to Matt, Arvi or anyone who was slicing a log into rounds, then grab on to the free end of the cross cut saw for a while, and help roll the rounds up the bank, then split and stack them. Then take a break to build a fire to make a pot of coffee and talk about the up-coming fishing season; then listen to the tide waves wash the beach while the woodcutter touched up the teeth on the saw with a file, then back to finish off the log. Sometimes the break we took was a walk up to Karen's Cafe for a bowl of fish chowder with lots of oyster crackers.

After the job was done, the workout made you feel good. You had some small

change in your pocket you didn't have before, and felt happy that your help was appreciated.

Lloyd C. Howell

I was born at "Halfway Farm," between Columbia Falls and Kalispell, Montana, July 29, 1917 to Ernest and Edna (Gosney) Howell.

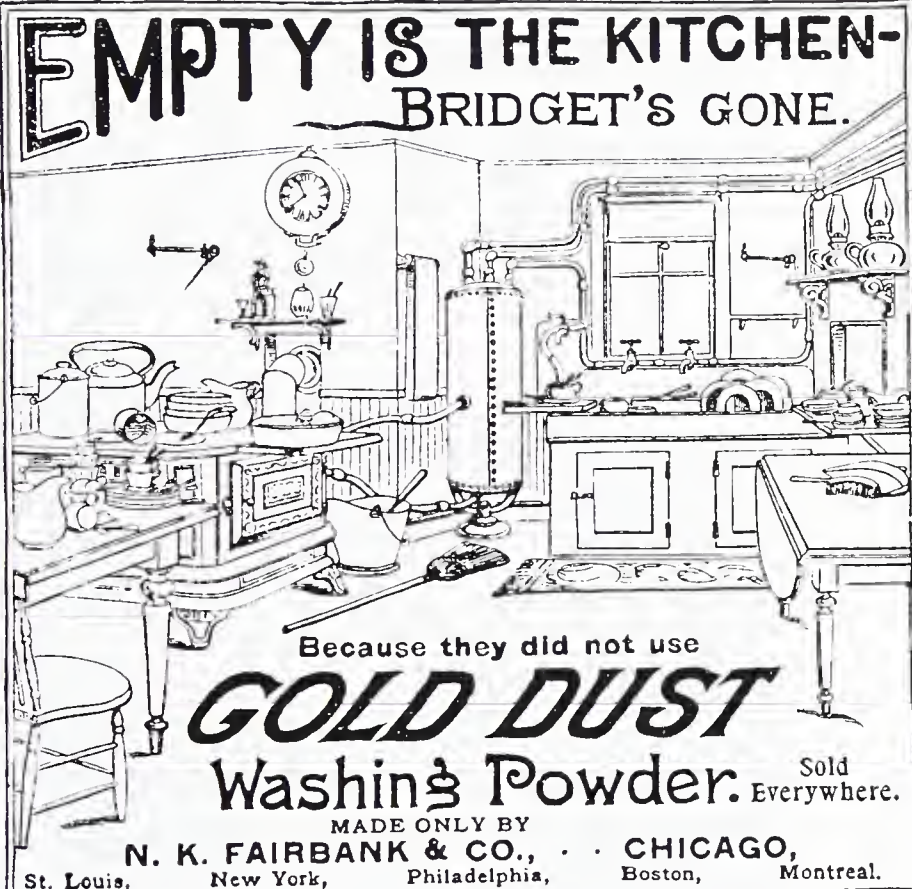
In 1920, my parents decided to sell the farm and get away from the harsh winters and move to a more temperate place. They found that place in Eugene.

My father was employed by the Oregon Electric Railway. In 1932, his position was abolished due to the ongoing Depression. He used his seniority to displace a more junior employee at the

S.P. & S. Railway freight office. The family moved from Eugene to Astoria.

I started my sophomore year at Astoria High School. I met my future wife, Eileen L'Amie, at a Soph Hop Dance. I established my S.P. & S. Railway seniority, September 5, 1935. After graduation, I went to work for the Oregon Trunk Railway, first at Madras, then at Bend. We were married July 4, 1937 and started married life at Bend. We had a son Michael, and a daughter, Linda Lee. Eileen died August 5, 1993 of Alzheimers.

We came back to Astoria in the fall of 1941. I retired from the S.P. & S. Railway, August 1, 1977 after working for the organization for 42 years, 36 of those years at the freight office in Astoria.



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From *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, August, 1893, Harper and Brothers, N.Y.

Ralph Arley Horton

By Raymond E. Horton

Ralph A. Horton was born March 1, 1891 in Akron, Ohio to Benjamin Woodward and Tazmon Edith Horton, one of four children, a brother and two sisters (Oscar Delos Horton, Grace Mildred Horton Bechler and Leona May Horton Lawrence).

When Ralph was seven years old, his mother died of typhoid fever. His father died of a heart problem three days later and Ralph went to live with his grandparents, Sarah and John Awkerman, near Creston, Ohio.

In 1908, he attended Valparaiso University for a year, funded by insurance his father had left and by waiting on tables. He worked at various jobs then, in an ice plant, machine shop and on railroad construction. In May of 1910, he came west to join his brother, Oscar, at Richland, Washington. He worked in the fruit and wheat harvests. In April 1911, he went to Walla Walla, Washington, working in a laundry and firing the boiler and taking care of the shaftline and belting. He also relieved the night foreman for the Pacific Power Stand-by Steam Plant at Walla Walla. He was offered the job full-time and took it. He worked from 10 p.m. until 8 a.m. seven days a week for a year and a half for \$65 dollars a month.

He learned that there was a Florence Graves in Walla Walla and wondered if she was the same person he knew at Valparaiso. [Apparently, she was.] They were married June 9, 1913. Ralph was then transferred to Pacific Power's hydro-electric plant on the Walla Walla River. Wages were \$70 a month with house, lights, fuel and water. While on the river, they had two children, Lester

R. Horton (August 8, 1914 to January 20, 1986) and Helen G. Horton (January 12, 1916). He was transferred back to the Walla Walla Steam Plant where three more children were added, Lucy I. Horton (February 24, 1917), Raymond E. Horton (September 4, 1920), and Stanley P. Horton (November 13, 1923 to January 1, 1924). He was transferred to the Astoria Youngs Bay Steam Plant as Superintendent in April 1924. He served there in that capacity until retirement in 1956 when they moved to Dallas, Oregon.

In Astoria, they were active in the First Methodist Church, Odd Fellows Lodge, Rebekah Lodge, the Astoria Garden Club, and the Angora Hiking Club. Florence Graves Horton died on April 14, 1979 and Ralph Horton died on January 19, 1988.

Editor's Notes

Ralph Horton lived in Astoria from 1924 to 1956. For thirty-two years, he photographed people and places in the county. Almost every photo in his collection is numbered and dated. Many photos were of taken of family members and the Pacific Power and Light's buildings, electrical substations, and power poles. Other subjects were: fishing, logging, commercial shipping, outings with the Angora Club all over the county, the Sea Scouts, Fort Stevens, the Salt Cairn at Seaside, Fort Clatsop, the First Methodist Church, Seaside, Cannon Beach and friends like the Hildebrand family.

These wonderful photos, a record the early decades of this century in Clatsop County, were donated to CCHS by his family.



CCHS Photo # 4367 Horton Collection
 "Old Folks At Home," is the title Ralph Horton gave to this photo he took of himself and his wife, Florence, on December 17, 1950 in the west side of the house where they lived from 1924 until his retirement in 1956. The house was located on the grounds of the PP & L plant on Youngs Bay. The gas company supervisor lived in the east half of the house.



CCHs Photo # 3044 Horton Collection

This photo and the one on the next page were taken on May 1, 1938. The view is to the north from the hillside above present-day West Marine Drive (formerly known as Taylor Street) near its intersection with Portway Street. (See photo next page.) Walt's Auto Wrecking is located at lower center. The Port of Astoria's buildings extend out into the Columbia River above. At left is Pier 3 and to the right is Pier 2.



CCHS Photo # 2069 Horton Collection

The cabin cruiser *Joanne*, built for Commodore A.N. Prouty of the Astoria Yacht Club, was launched at the Astoria Marine Construction Shipyards on January 27, 1935. The boat was designed and built by Joe Dyer. It had sleeping accommodations for eight people.



CCHs Photo # 3043 Horton Collection
 Shown is the intersection of Portway Street with Taylor Avenue. Portway Beer Parlor was on the northeast corner. Union Fishermen's Co-operative Packing Company appears at top right. One of the signs on the billboard advertised Chesterfield Cigarettes. The fill between Taylor Avenue and the railroad tracks was fairly new. It was later extended to the other side of the tracks.



CCHS Photo #3040 Horton Collection
 Gillnet fishing boats at Astoria on May 1, 1938.



CCHs Photo # 4804 Horton Collection

Landslide at First and Commercial streets in Astoria on January 8, 1954. With much creaking and groaning, the houses, yielded to the slippage of land beneath them. Twenty-eight houses were destroyed or moved. For more photos of this slide, see the Winter 1996 *Cumtux*.



CCHS Photo # 1231 Horton Collection

September 29, 1925. This U.S. Navy PB1 hydroplane got into trouble off the Oregon Coast in September 1925. The heavy 800-horsepower Packard Liberty motor with twelve cylinders was lifted out of the plane for examination at Pier 2 at the Port of Astoria's terminal.



CCHs Photo # 1034 Horton Collection

In 1921, Pacific Power and Light Company built a steam power plant on Youngs Bay that operated for more than five decades. From 1921 to 1923, the plant burned oil. It was then converted to using hog fuel (wood chips) which was off-loaded at the dock at the right of the steam plant. The gas plant is left of the water tower. In front of it is the house that the R.A. Horton family lived in. A concrete wall at the extreme left went around the tanks of oil from which the gas was produced. June 8, 1924.



CCHS Photo # 3918A Horton Collection

A Red Cross class given in January 1945 at St. Mary's Hospital. The girl in front is holding a First Aid textbook. In a companion photo (not shown here), the girls were practicing artificial respiration.



CCHs Photo # 1884 Horton Collection

This photo shows the cars of visitors to the Oregon National Guard encampment at Camp Clatsop on Clatsop Plains on June 22, 1934. Three thousand guardsmen had arrived at the camp on June 13th to begin their annual summer training. After a more than a week of exercises, the men put on a spectacular military show for visitors which included the firing of big guns at Fort Stevens and a combat demonstration.



CCHS Photo # 2095 Horton Collection

The Civilian Conservation Corps at Camp Boyington on June 22, 1934. This camp, established in 1933 as a part of a national jobs program, was named for Clatsop County's Judge Guy Boyington. It was one of the first in the area and for a time, was the main camp with 196 men who worked building roads. The camp was located between Olney and the summit on the Nehalem highway in a meadow. In October of 1935, all but fifty of the men were shifted to a new main camp on the Nehalem River.



CCHs Photo # 1818 Horton Collection

An amphibian boat at the Turn-Around in Seaside on July 18, 1933. The sign on the building in the background urges readers to “Swim in a Jantzen Suit.” The boat made daily trips out through the surf at Seaside thrilling hundreds of passengers with a ride through the waves.



CCHS Photo # 1198 Horton Collection

Physical culture devotees at the beach on the 4th of July 1925.



CCHS Photo # 3060 Horton Collection

Broadway Street in Seaside on May 30, 1938.



CCHS Photo # 1916 Horton Collection

Repairs were being made on the south jetty on the Columbia River on July 8, 1934 when R.A. Horton took this photo. More than 600,000 tons of rock was brought by railroad flatcars from Green Mountain in Clatsop County. Fifty five thousand tons came from Goble, Oregon. One train made the trip each day with a load weighing about a thousand tons. Work on the jetty began originally in 1886, was said to have been completed in 1913, but in 1915 two storms wiped out a large part of it. Repairs have been required every few years.



CCHS Photo # 1263 Horton Collection
Cannon Beach as viewed from Haystack Rock on April 25, 1926.

The 1914 Diary of Bella Bloom

Transcribed by Kathleen E. Brownell

Introduction

The entries that follow are from a portion of the diary of Bella Bloom, a teen-aged girl from Portland. Most of the diary was written in Portland, before and after her visit to Gearhart, but only the Gearhart entries are excerpted here. From the diary, we learn about the kinds of activities the daughter of a prosperous Portland merchant found to do each day at the beach.

From other diary entries, we learn that Bella, who is Jewish, is strongly attracted to Martin, a non-Jew. She later decides that she must try to find someone of her own faith. For those who would like to read other passages from this diary, a copy will be available at the CCHS archives.

We are indebted to Kathleen Brownell for recognizing this treasure and transcribing it. Kathleen did far more, however. She researched Bella's family and found not just the relatives and descendants of Bella, but she found Bella, herself, alive, some eighty years later! For more on Bella, see her biography at the end of this story.

Diary Entries:

Mon. July 6, 1914

Packed in the morning, then went down town with Ruth Stien & bot her a beautiful string of jet & crystal beads for their engagement present. Then called Father up long distance to see if he was coming. Then went down town 3 times to get Mother a pair of shoes. In evening went to executive meeting. Called up Martin & said good bye to him. He said

he would call up in the morning before I go. Fanny & Gertie Abrahamson came over.

Tues. July 7, 1914

Got up 5:30 AM. Rosie Schaff came with us. Got train to Seaside. Martin met us at the depot. Gave me a box of chocklats for today is my 19th birthday. Train left 8:25. Wrote to Martin, Sommer girls, Fanny A, Bessy L, Elsie Clausner, Ed Nudelman, Vic Hoeflich, Bearnot, Snyder, Lipson, Gillman, Pitkofsky, Clara Zaik, Martins, Ryins, Ruby Barde, L.H. Miller, Klines, Krichekkys, Gross, Stien, Wollins, Max, Weiser, Silver, Gordon Nusbaum, Hofman, Sagorsky, Barrel. Had lunch at Goodman's. Went to beach, played box-ball. Had good time all day.

Wed. July 8, 1914

Played 3 games of box-ball. Went to beach & sewed. Met Martha & Anna Levitt. Took 3 pictures in bathing suits & went in bathing. Water quite cold. Went to depot to see if Papa came but got stung.

Thurs. July 9, 1914

Played box-ball, took pictures & went in surf. In afternoon went to depot to see if Papa came but he did not come. Sat on beach and sewed a while. At 5 PM went with Chucle, Helen, Ophelia, & Mr. Larfinkle (an old man who stays with Mrs. Harris) crabbing & clam digging. Broke shovel on first clam. Lots of starfish & large number of shells. In evening went to picture show.

Fri. July 10, 1914

Mail in AM from Bessie, Flossie, Rebecca, Rose Summers & Victor. Answered Bessie Flossie, Bec. Received 2 invitations for Rose's lawn party of July

19. In afternoon, mail from Ruby Barde. In evening went down town, had milkshake.

Sat. July 11, 1914

Mail from Ed Nudelman. Went for a long walk on the beach. The tide was out and a chinaman was digging clams & his coat was lying on the beach. The dog chewed a sleeve off his coat. At noon went to train & also 6 PM to see if Papa came but he did not come. In evening went to beach. There was a confetti battle. Got all full of confetti. Then went to dance with Martha Levitt & the Williams girls. (Martha introduced them to me -- very sweet girls they are).

Sun. July 12, 1914

Went to depot to see if Papa came. Mrs. Goodman & Mr. Heldford came but Papa did not. Mail from Martin, Jenny Ryan, Ruth Stien, Polly Silver, Tillie Nusbaum. Answered Martin. I'm terribly sorry Martin cannot come out here this summer. I would love to see him here. This place is so terribly lonesome. I miss everyone of my friends, especially Martin. I will be so glad when I can go home for a while. It is so gloomy here today --- nothing to do. I am reading *The Woman In White* by Collins. It is pretty good.

Mon. July 13, 1914 cloudy

Wrote to Ed Nudelman, Ruth S, & Polly. Then went for walk on beach. In evening played "Whisk" with Sarah, Helen & Ophelia. The game broke up in a row. Went in bathing. Water cold.

Tues. July 14, 1914

Mail from Elsie Clausner, Rose & Clara Sommers, Anna & Berth Makin. In morning went picking berries. Got large pailfull of huckleberries, blackberries & wild gooseberries. Went in bathing. The water was lovely. I lolled around for 45 minutes in the water then bot paper, envelopes, & wrote to Victor H, Rose & Clara Sommers, Anna & B Martin, Elsie Clausner, Ruby Barde, Jennie Ryan & Tillie Nusbaum.

Wed. July 15, 1914

Went to P.O. got the mail. After that sat & read for a while. Went bathing etc., had a good time all day.

Thur. July 16, 1914

Sewed in the morning. In afternoon went bathing. The water was perfly delightful and I had a lovely time. Three fellows passed when we were in the water & we waved. They came in & wanted me to go out & jump the breakers with them but I was too wise ---- I don't intend to drown here. Took pictures on the beach.

Fri. July 17, 1914

In AM went berrying with a crowd of girls. Had a fine time & got quite a few huckleberries. Went to Seaside House. When we came back went in bathing. After that dressed & went down town.

Sat. July 18, 1914

Papa & Louis came to Seaside. Went bowling, could not go bathing today. Then we had ice cream, looked around town. Rec'd mail from Martin, short little letter but the poor boy can't think of anything to write. He is going away in Sept. No words can express how I hate to see him go.

Sun. July 19, 1914

Left for Portland at 7:20 AM with Rosie Schaff. Had lunch at Schaff's house. Then called up Martin. He was not home but will call me at 6 PM. Polly Silver & Bessy Labby came over & I went to the show with them...

Mon. July 20, 1914

Went down town in morning to get several things. Came back & cut 2 middy blouses for Goodman girls... Had supper & lunches at Schaff's. Then took train 6:30 PM back to Seaside. Arrival 11:30. Papa & Louis met me at the depot. Expected to take Bookkeeping 2 exam this morning. That is why I came to town. But Supt. Rigler died & the schools were closed.

Tues. July 21, 1914

Got up late, had breakfast. Mail from

Elsie, Easie, Molly. Wrote to Martin, Ed, Elsie, Bessie & Flo. Went horseback riding & bowling. Started to crochet a shawl for Mrs. Goodman.

Wed. July 22, 1914

Went bathing, took long walk on beach --- went bowling. Dad left on 6:30 PM to Portland. He leaves Sat. Evening for N.Y. He opened up an acc't for \$200.00 for me in the 1st State Bank of Seaside, Ore. In evening went to movies.

Thurs. July 23, 1914

Went to the woods to pick berries. Walked on rr [railroad], track south but could not find any. Asked a lady where there were some & she said "on the other side of the Wahanna River." Crossed bridge & fished around in the woods an hour but found nothing -- so went back on rr. track toward Gearhart. Walked till Gearhart & we got hungry. Helen Goodman's little brother Louis had 20 cents so we went after something to eat. I never saw such a town in my life. Only one street & the store all near the beach & most of the houses on the beach. Got bucket of huckleberries -- baked pies, toasted marshmalloos & wrote to Ida Kritchifsky, Easie Waxf, Ruby Barde.

Fri. July 24, 1914

Mail from Sophie Kline. Went bathing. Rec'd pictures from Portland & sent some to Louis & Papa back east. Wrote to Gertrude, Ed Lipson, B. Bearnot, Dot Wieser, Polly Silver, Molly Pithofsky, Mrs. Pelton.

Thur July 30, 1914

Went to the woods near Seaside House for a picnic. All Goodmans and all our family including Rosie Schaff went. We camped in a lovely spot near the bank of the Necanicum river. There was a bush of wild currants there and we picked them. Had lunch and played cards. Met some Indians and bot a little Indian basket from them. [Jennie Michelle, the well-known resident of north Seaside, and a Clatsop Indian, may have been one of

them.] Then we went wading in the river and took pictures, but it was too slippery so we went to the beach. Wore bloomers so we took our skirts off and went wading but 2 men were watching us. Built fire & toasted sausage & marshmallows.

Wed. Aug. 19, 1914

Went bathing. Sat on the beach & sewed, finished sofa cushion.

[Many entries like the one above follow.]

Mon. Aug 24, 1914

In afternoon went to the tank. Jack Crossly was also there and he taught me to float. Jack is a very nice sort of a boy. A perfect gentleman and very jolly and good looking. In the evening made candy.

Wed. Aug 26, 1914

In morning received call from Dad. Told him we are coming home in the morning and he should meet us at the depot...

[End of selection from the diary. Bella returned to Portland Aug 27, 1914.]

Biography of Bella Bloom Gevurtz

Bella was born July 7, 1895 at Taunton, Massachusetts, the daughter of Max Bloom [originally Berg] and Mary Nacamolvich. Both came from Russia; Mary was from Riga. They met and married in New York, then moved to Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, and Montana before settling in San Francisco, California where Max operated two shoe shops. The Earthquake of 1906 destroyed one shop while looters emptied the other. They lived in the back of the surviving store and cooked outside for a year. Bella's mother had been injured in the quake, and though she lived twenty seven years more, she was never well. Max was suffered financially, but was able to re-establish his business of buying stock from bankrupt shoe shops.

The family moved to Portland where they lived comfortably. Bella did well in school and soon after graduation, her

father bought her a Chalmers car. She had planned to go to Milan to study voice but the outbreak of WWI changed these plans. Louis Gevurtz courted her and they were married in 1918. Louis was president of Gevurtz Furniture, served as president of the Retail Furniture Dealers Association and was a member of the State Furniture and Bedding Council. He died in 1967. Bella died April 18, 1996 at the age of one hundred, leaving three

daughters and one son.

The diary was found in a house at 554 N.E. Royal Court, Portland, Oregon in 1983 when floor boards were ripped up near the eaves. The owner of the diary is Robert and Barbara Liddicoat of Portland who allowed their friend Kathleen Brownell to copy it. The family of Bella Gevurtz gave their permission to reprint portions in Cumtux.

The Seemingly Endless Search for the Descendants of the Astoria POHL's

By Carl T. Bochau

My search started by accident in Germany in 1995 while looking for primary source material regarding the family of my grandfather, Charles H. Bochau, who emigrated to America with his mother in 1882. I soon discovered that Charles' father was Theodor Bochau who was one of six children all born in Elmshorn, Schleswig - Holstein, Germany. I was fortunate enough to do research in the Elmshorn archives and in one day acquired the baptismal certificates for three generations of Bochau's. I also found out that by the 1870s, all of Theodor's siblings as well as his mother had emigrated to America, primarily to Astoria. Since 1995, I have found the descendants of almost all of the six children except Friederika Bochau. Friederika was my 2nd great aunt.

Friederika married Ferdinand Wentzeslaus Pohl in Elmshorn, Germany on April 9, 1859. Five children were born in Germany: Waldeman about 1861, William Charles December 25, 1863, Elizabeth about 1868, Olga about 1870 and Alma about 1873. Around 1874 or 1875, this family emigrated to Astoria, Oregon. A sixth child, Max W., was born in Astoria, August 7, 1876. Both William Charles and Max W. had descendants. It is very likely that Waldeman, Elizabeth, Olga and Alma all married and had chil-

dren. William Charles had four children: Flora who married a Huntley, May who married a Rowland, William B. who married a Karki, and Alonzo B.

William B. and Lydia Karki had at least one child, William B. Jr., born July 1, 1919 in Astoria. Max, the youngest son of Friederika and Ferdinand married Grace Gribler on December 22, 1903 in Astoria. It is known that they had at least one child also named Maxwell. On May 14, 1928 in Astoria, Maxwell married Marie A. Brazeal.

It is hoped that someone will read the above information and help me find some present-day descendants of this Pohl family, all of whom would be my cousins.

One last bit of information: In August of 1879, Friederika obtained a divorce from Ferdinand W. Pohl. It is not known what happened to him. Friederika later married a Robert Lanfare and lived out the rest of her life in Bay Center, Washington. She is buried in the Pioneer Cemetery at Bay Center with her second husband, Robert Lanfare, and her son, Maxwell Pohl.

Carl T. Bochau's address is: 10070 Green Clover Drive, Ellicott City, MD 21042. He can also be reached by email: k3len@home.com.

Editor's Notes

By Liisa Penner

Two families reunited:

The last issue of *Cumtux* had an inquiry from Eero Kujanpaa of Finland who was seeking his relatives in Oregon, descendants of John Kustaa Maki formerly of Ylistaro, Finland. Not long after the issue was in the mail, we received a letter from Mercy Niemi of Corvallis, Oregon who wrote that her cousin, Helen Maki Castagnola, was the daughter of John Maki. Helen also wrote and said that she was very happy to be getting in touch with these relatives after so many years.

Steve Forrester of the *Daily Astorian* forwarded a query on to us from a man in Denmark seeking Mathiesen relatives in Clatsop County. A phone call to Margaret Mathiesen revealed that her husband had been a relative. Margaret and her daughter were pleased to have renewed contact with her husband's family in Europe.

Anna Sieverts

We are seeking help in locating a photo of Anna Siverts, a teacher in Bradwood, Cannon Beach, Gearhart and other schools in the county in the 1930s. We have an article planned on some of the Danish families in the county and need her photo and any reminiscences about her.

Looking for photos of an old airplane

A recent visitor to the Archives from California is searching for photographs of an airplane owned by Ed Thomas from about 1934 to 1936. (Thomas had an auto repair shop in Astoria on the southwest corner of 14th and Bond Streets.) He hopes that a Thomas family member could be located who might have photos. The plane was a Security "Airster" low wing aircraft with a hundred horsepower motor. It was black with a red stripe, Number: NC 14231 S/N 21.

Old negatives at Compleat Photographer

A few weeks ago, Jon Westerholm stopped by the Archives and told me he had a negative to give me. I was quite surprised to find that it was a picture of me, taken thirty-five years ago! Jon said that he had learned that the Compleat Photographer had a huge collection of old negatives that Chuck and Sara Meyer wished to return to the owners. A few days later, Diane Collier of Warrenton stopped by with a small bundle of negatives for the Archives that she had gotten there too. It included many class and sports photos from Gray School in the 1950s and 1960s, Astoria High School reunions, evidence in old court cases, and the coronation of Regatta Queen Gayle Ross in 1958. Sara Meyer later confirmed that the store has a large collection of negatives originally from the Ball Studio, and that she will be happy to have people stop by and browse through them and take the ones of themselves, their friends or relatives, without charge.

Discovery in the Archives

Did you write a report on local history in a Clatsop County school in 1948 as part of a competition? If so, it may be in the CCHS Archives. The most popular subjects were Fort Clatsop and Fort George. Call CCHS at (503) 325-2203 and we'll look for your report.



The Arch Cape tunnel on March 21, 1938. In 1936, workers began carving rock out of the tunnel at the rate of ten to fifteen tons a day. A year later, the tunnel had been nearly drilled through. A couple of months before this photo was taken, the floor of the tunnel was being rocked and sanded.

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